



Families



# SOP and Safeguarding Policy Appendix.

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Nugent Care Registered Charity: 1187072-1.



nugent  
adoption

# Statement of Purpose and Function: Nugent Adoption

As required under the Adoption National Minimum Standards and the Voluntary Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005

This Statement of Purpose has been produced to supply information for:

- Local Authorities and placing agencies
- Prospective Adopters
- Approved Adopters
- Children and young people
- Birth Parents and relatives
- Any member of the public who is interested in the mission, function or operation of Nugent Adoption

Any comments about the Statement of Purpose should be addressed in the first instance to:

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Adoption Registered Manager

Nugent Adoption

6 Chain Lane

St Helens

WA11 9RA

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General e-mail: [adoption@wearenugent.org](mailto:adoption@wearenugent.org)

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<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Responsible Individual / Signed Off By</b>	Susan Cuffe, Agency Decision Maker
<b>Review Date</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2022
<b>Originally Approved by Trustees / Governing Body</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2006
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<b>Date of Next Scheduled Review</b>	April 2023

## Introduction

Nugent has a history dating back to the 1850s when Father James Nugent, a Catholic priest responded to the poverty and appalling conditions facing many children in Liverpool at that time.

Nugent has developed over the years and now offers a diverse and modernised range of services for children and vulnerable adults. Nugent has been involved in finding families through adoption since 1917 and had built up a wide range of experience in the recruitment, assessment of applicants and the placement and support of children. In addition, Nugent has also developed a specialism in assessing applicants for inter-country adoption, which now takes place in partnership with The Intercountry Adoption Centre, Barnet, London.

The Central Office of Nugent is based in Liverpool with the work carried out throughout Merseyside, the Isle of Man, West Lancashire, Halton, Warrington and parts of Greater Manchester and Cheshire.

Our work is guided by the following values framework and aims to be of the highest professional standards. Nugent provides services to all sections of the community and works with all people to be inclusive of race, gender/gender identity, age, LBGTQ+, disability, religious faith or none.

The graphic displays seven values in a list, each with a corresponding description. The values are: integrity, ambition, courage, compassion, optimism, respect, and dignity. The descriptions are: we are honest in what we say and do; we have high hopes for the future; we stand up for what we know is right; we are kind and support each other; we believe we can; we accept one another and look after all we share; and we value ourselves and each other. The graphic also includes the text 'our values: iaccord' and the Nugent logo 'together we are nugent'. At the bottom left, it states 'N380 Registered Charity: 222930'.

our values: iaccord		together we are nugent
integrity	we are honest in what we say and do	
ambition	we have high hopes for the future	
courage	we stand up for what we know is right	
compassion	we are kind and support each other	
optimism	we believe we can	
respect	we accept one another and look after all we share	
dignity	we value ourselves and each other	

N380 Registered Charity: 222930

## Governance

Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, Nugent Care, the charity (working under the branded name of 'Nugent') are governed by Nugent Care 2019 Ltd. Nugent Care 2019 (NC2019) became the sole corporate Trustee of Nugent Care. Therefore, the role of Governing Body within Nugent has been superseded by this arrangement.

The Trust deed sets out our charitable objects of Nugent, including:

***“To provide for the relief and care of young children through the provision of an adoption agency or service and fostering facilities”***

The NC2019 Trustees are responsible for the strategic direction of Nugent; for defining policy and guiding the charity in the pursuance of its objectives and in accordance with its philosophy.

The NC2019 Trustees are the stewards of the financial, human and material resources of Nugent and they ensure that the charity works within legal and financial guidelines.

The Registered Charity Number is 1187072.

The Chair of the NC2019 Trustees is John-Paul Dennis. The NC2019 Trustees meet four times a year and receive regular information about the operation of the Adoption Service. In addition, the NC2019 Trustees receive an annual Adoption Panel report and review and approve the Statement of Purpose.

Responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive who is in turn supported by the Executive and Senior Leadership Teams. Details of the management structure appear on Pages 10 and 11.

Nugent Adoption is committed to providing a service in which we work with and through others – i.e. we would not work in isolation from the children, young people and adopters and the professional networks around them. The Agency works in line with the Nugent Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. In the context of adoption, collaboration will be with other voluntary agencies and local authorities so we can play our part in the provision of an adoption service envisaged in the Voluntary Adoption Agencies and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2003, the Adoption Agency Regulations 2005, the Adoption Minimum Standards and Guidance 2011.

There are already well-established links with the various adoption organisations, namely:

Adoption in Merseyside, Together for Adoption and Adoption Counts, Coram BAAF (British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering); The Adoption Agencies' Consultancy Group on Inter Country Adoption, the Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies, (CVAA) other voluntary agencies throughout the country and Local Authorities outside of the Merseyside area including those in Wales and Scotland.

Nugent Adoption, as part of the wider Nugent is supported by the integrated infrastructure of the organisation which includes IT support, Human Resources, Finance, Learning and Development, Marketing and Communications, Property Management, Health and Safety and a Governance Department.

## **The Objectives of Nugent Adoption**

Nugent Adoption believes that all children have the right to family life and that they should be brought up in families that can provide stable, loving care and promote a sense of self-worth, identity and belonging.

There are some children who, for a variety of reasons, are not able to live with their birth families and need alternative permanent families.

Nugent Adoption exists therefore:

- To provide for those children in the Care system who need a family placement.
- To ensure that the whole service is focused on the wellbeing of the child and ensuring that their needs are met and their rights are upheld.
- To ensure that children, birth parents and adopters receive the highest possible standards of service and are treated with respect, honesty and sensitivity.
- To provide secure placements where the child's needs have been carefully matched with the skills, abilities and attributes of adoptive parents and to support such placements in order to minimise the risks of disruption.
- To offer training and support to adoptive families during assessment, after approval and following placement and to offer lifelong advice and support to the adoptee and adopters after the Adoption Order has been made.
- To allow staff to fulfil their responsibilities to children, adopters and birth parents and provide an excellent service.
- To provide a meaningful contribution to the provision of a comprehensive adoption service with links with Coram BAAF, CVAA and through a collaboration with the ICA-RAA (inter-country adoption regional adoption agency). The agency is also a member of Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN).
- To work in partnership with Local Authorities and placing agencies.

## **Principles underlying the service**

The principles guiding the Adoption Service are the same as those which direct the work of the whole of Nugent which are based on the unique worth and dignity of the individual. Our children's services are emboldened by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and, in all that we do, we aim to fulfil legislative requirements and comply with good practice. Therefore, Nugent Adoption will work so that every child who comes into contact with our service will be supported to achieve their potential.

To achieve this, the Adoption Service will work in accordance with the following principles;

#### *The Welfare Principle*

The promotion of the child's welfare will be the central point of all aspects of our work from the first contact made with a prospective adopter, through to the advice being given to a birth relative seeking assistance decades after an adoption order has been granted.

#### *Safeguarding*

The Agency will strive to ensure that children are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and ill treatment. Safeguarding principles inform every aspect of the Agency's work with rigorous checks being made during the recruitment of staff, assessment of adopters and the monitoring of placements.

#### *Openness and Honesty*

The Agency will, in all its work, strive to work in partnership with all those involved in the adoption process and in the spirit of transparency and clarity.

#### *Confidentiality*

The Agency will respect confidentiality and privacy about individuals who use our service.

#### *Inclusion*

The Agency will seek to promote the rights of those at risk of being excluded from modern society and will work to make sure that its services are non-discriminatory, accessible and easily understood.

#### *Accountability*

The Agency accepts and welcomes external scrutiny and inspection. In addition, it will ensure that it operates a robust complaints system and allows for service users to feedback comments and opinions about their experiences of the work of the Agency.

#### *Social Justice*

The Agency, in accordance with its Catholic origins, works to promote social justice. On the basis that any child unable to live with their birth family is already disadvantaged and in the knowledge that many children in the Care system have experienced neglect, abuse, dislocation and rejection. The Adoption Service exists to uphold their rights to experience all the advantages of stable family life and therefore to reach their full potential. It is for this reason that the Nugent Care Adoption Service aims to provide the very best in adoption practice.

## **Our function as an adoption agency is to provide a service to:**

### *1. Those wishing to adopt:*

The Agency seeks to recruit, assess and prepare prospective adopters for children referred by local authorities and other agencies. Prospective adopters will be assessed in accordance with criteria set out in the Adoption Agency Regulations 2005 and the subsequent Amendments in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Nugent Adoption is part of the ICA-RAA to provide an inter-country adoption service. Prospective inter-country adopters will need to demonstrate, via a comprehensive home study assessment, that they have the necessary skills and personal qualities to successfully parent a child adopted from overseas and that they meet the legal requirements under UK and international law.

The Agency will provide support to adoptive families beyond the granting of an Adoption Order, if requested.

### *2. Those who have been adopted through Nugent:*

The Agency offers adopted people support and specific help to obtain certified copies of their original birth certificates, and if requested, to access their adoption files and help to trace birth relatives.

### *3. Children in public care referred to the Agency for placement with Adoptive parents:*

The Agency seeks to recruit adopters for children on referral from local authorities and other agencies. Cultural, racial, linguistic and religious backgrounds of children will be reflected when placements are considered.

### *4. Birth relatives:*

The Agency will offer advice and support to people who have placed a child for adoption through the Agency, for as long as this support is needed. Requests by birth relatives for information or assistance in tracing adopted adults will be considered on an individual basis.

## **The services we offer in Nugent Adoption**

Our aim is to offer placements for children who need love, safety and stability in a family setting. We aim to continually develop services to meet the needs of adopters and children. The services we currently offer include:

- Recruitment and assessment of adopters – to adopt UK children [domestic adoption]
- Assessment of adopters – to adopt children from other countries as part of the ICA-RAA, in collaboration with the intercountry adoption centre.
- Preparation to Adopt training sessions
- Qualified and highly experienced social workers to assess and support adopters
- Lifelong support to the adopter and adopted children
- Support to adopted children's birth family
- Support to adopted adults who we have helped place in adoptive homes
- Access to additional support through the wider Nugent network where factors such as disability, sight or hearing impairment, learning difficulties, educational difficulties impact on adoptive placements
- Help with maintaining contact arrangements for children with their birth family
- Help in accessing other specialist or therapeutic support that children or adopters might need

### *Other services we offer*

The Adoption Service and wider Nugent services have a range of other experience and expertise and can offer additional services to individuals, other organisations and Local Authorities. These can include:

- Chairing of Adoption Disruption meetings
- Independent assessments or investigations
- Chairing and/or membership of adoption, permanence and fostering panels
- Permanence Order assessments
- Targeted family finding for specific groups of children or individual children
- Direct work with children – including Life Story work
- Therapeutic services to adoptive families e.g. Theraplay® informed intervention

This list is not exhaustive. We would be happy to discuss any service you feel we may be able to help with. A negotiable fee would apply for the provision of services.

## Who are the children we place?

Meeting the needs of the children is our biggest priority. They will have a range of needs depending on their individual circumstances but these can include:

- Children with a learning disability or physical disability
- Brothers and sisters who need to stay together
- Children whose development might have been delayed
- Children for whom their future development is uncertain
- Older children
- Children where there is a parental history of substance misuse
- Children where there is some family history of mental health problems
- Children who have been waiting too long for permanence

## Criteria for Adopters

### *Domestic Adoption*

- Enquiries from anyone legally entitled to adopt will be considered. Couples must demonstrate that they have a stable relationship.
- Infertility treatment, if undertaken, must be completed prior to commencement of the assessment.
- In deliberations about placing children, the Agency's practice will be to emphasise meeting the child's needs in placing the child. Whenever possible we will seek to place children with adopters of the same racial, cultural, linguistic and religious background; recognising that these are key features in a child's life, but not the only criteria to be discussed.
- In line with Nugent's Basic Principles, every effort will be made to recruit appropriate prospective adopters of any religious denomination or none.

Nugent funds this work initially from its voluntary funds. The Agency's costs will then be met by an inter-agency placement fee, payable by the placing Local Authority or Regional Adoption Agency.

### *Inter-Country Adoption*

Nugent's primary concern when undertaking assessments of prospective inter-country adopters is to safeguard the wellbeing of the children placed for adoption from overseas. These placements are usually in respect of children for whom no suitable alternative placement is available in their country of origin.

- Initial enquiries will be directed to the IAC who will advise and provide relevant and specialist information and guidance.
- The process of assessment, preparation and placement will be co-ordinated by the IAC. Nugent will undertake stage 2 assessments (home study) and other direct work required as part of the service of the ICA-RAA for prospective adopters within the North of England.
- Enquiries from couples and single people will be considered. Couples must demonstrate that they have a stable relationship. It is expected that applicants will meet the eligibility criteria of the child's country of origin.
- Infertility treatment, if undertaken, must be completed prior to commencement of the assessment.
- Prospective inter-country adopters will need to demonstrate that they have an understanding and appreciation of the racial, cultural, linguistic and religious background of children from their country of choice. Prospective inter-country adopters will be charged a fee for this service and the Intercountry Adoption Centre will commission Nugent to undertake assessments in our region as required.

## **The Organisational Structure of the Agency**

### *Registered Provider information*

Normandie Wragg  
Chief Executive Officer  
Nugent  
99 Edge Lane  
Liverpool  
L7 2PE

The Registered Manager, Jo Lloyd, is line managed by the Agency Decision Maker, and Responsible Individual, Susan Cuffe.

Assistant Adoption Team Manager is Paula Gibbins, who in turn line manages the Adoption Social Workers.

Julie Barber, Administrative Supervisor, is line manager to the Administrative Assistant employed by the Agency. Ms Barber is herself line managed by the Registered Manager.

### *The Adoption Agency is staffed by:*

- 1 Registered Manager
- 1 Assistant Team Manager / Senior Practitioner
- 3 x Adoption Assessment Social Workers
- 1.8 x Adoption Support Social Workers
- 0.5 Senior Administrator
- 1 Assistant Administrator

### *Qualifications and Experience of Registered Manager*

Jo Lloyd joined Nugent in April 2021 as Registered Manager. Jo has a range of management and strategic experience with children and young people's services. Jo qualified with a Masters in Social Work from Liverpool John Moores University and then worked in a Local Authority Adoption Team, which then merged into a Regional Adoption Agency. Jo sits as a panel member on the RAA. Jo also holds a professional management foundation qualification and is currently studying for her PEPS qualification in supervising social work students.

### *Staffing*

All social work staff employed by the Adoption Agency hold a recognised social work qualification. All are experienced practitioners with considerable experience in work with children and families. Team members serve on a Voluntary Adoption Agency Adoption Panel. All are professionally registered with Social Work England.

### Team Members

Ms Jo Lloyd Registered Manager (f/t)	MA Social Work, IPD Management Foundation Programme, currently studying for PEPS2
Mrs Paula Gibbins Assistant Manager (f/t)	Dip SW; PQ1, ILM 5,
Ms Carol Robinson Adoption Social Worker (p/t 0.8)	BA Hons Social Work
Ms Denice White (f/t) Adoption Social Worker	MA Social Work
Miss Ashley Dolan (f/t) Adoption Social Worker	BA in Social Studies and Social Work
Mrs Emma Gardner Adoption Support Social Worker (p/t 0.8)	BA Hons Social Work
Mrs Dara Campbell Adoption Support Social Worker (f/t)	MA in Social Work

Two administrative staff support the Team:

Ms Julie Barber, Administration Supervisor (p/t 0.5)
Mrs Gillian Thomas, Administrative Assistant (f/t)

Nugent Adoption is on occasion supported by a number of commissioned self-employed social workers who work under the supervision of the Assistant Manager and/or Service Manager.

### Adoption Panel

Our Adoption Panel considers applications from people who wish to be approved as adopters. The Panel makes a **recommendation** to Nugent's Agency Decision Maker who will make the final **decision**.

Panel also look at changes to approval, de-registration of adopters and can give advice during the assessment. It also has a monitoring role on the quality of assessment work and checks that work is progressed in a timely and thorough way.

Panel is made up of a mixture of people who have either personal or professional experience of adoption. It includes people with experience as adopters and people who have themselves been adopted. Panel also has access to medical and legal advisors. More details on the Panel processes are in our information pack.

Panel members are drawn from a "Central List". A maximum of 10 members can sit as a Panel; the minimum number to form a quorate Panel is 5 members including the Chair or Vice Chair

and a Social Worker. If the person chairing the meeting is not an Independent Person, then another independent person must also be present.

*Current membership of the Central List is:*

Chair	<b>Paul Ross</b>	Independent (Adoptee)
Vice Chair	<b>Tony Connor</b>	Independent [Social Worker]
	<b>Kelly Wise</b>	Independent [Social Worker]
	<b>Linda McNeill</b>	Independent [Social Worker]
	<b>Margaret Baxter</b>	Independent [Adopter]
	<b>Alfred Yates</b>	Independent [Retired Head Teacher]
	<b>Dr George Hobbs</b>	Medical Advisor
	<b>Louise Seresini</b>	Independent [Previous Adoption Social Worker]

*The Adoption Panel is assisted by:*

Legal Advisor	<b>Rachel Burns</b> – Morecrofts Solicitors
Panel Advisor	<b>Jo Lloyd</b>
Panel Administrator	<b>Julie Barber</b>

*Agency Decision Maker*

The Agency Decision Maker is Susan Cuffe, who is a Senior Manager employed by Nugent. The back-up Agency Decision Maker is Kathleen Pitt.

Ms Cuffe can be contacted at:

Nugent  
99 Edge Lane,  
Liverpool,  
L7 2PE  
Telephone: 0151 261 2000  
Fax: 0151 261 2001  
Email: [Susan.Cuffe@wearenugent.org](mailto:Susan.Cuffe@wearenugent.org)  
Website: [www.wearenugent.org](http://www.wearenugent.org)

*Monitoring and evaluation*

As well as the Panel having a monitoring role on adoption work, the Adoption service is monitored in line with Nugent's policies and procedures.

Regular management reports are produced as follows:

- Dashboard Report to the Trustees Quarterly
- Dashboard Report to Nugent Executive Monthly
- Adoption Income Stream Forecast Monthly
- Stage 1 and stage 2 Timescale compliance For each adoption panel
- ASGLB Dataset Quarterly
- Adoption Panel Chair's Report 6 monthly

Annual appraisals of Panel Members are also undertaken.

We are also externally inspected by Ofsted and copies of their inspection reports are available on their website or on request to the Adoption Registered Manager.

## **Process for recruiting and approving prospective Adopters**

Nugent Adoption seeks to recruit prospective adoptive parents to meet the needs of children requiring adoptive placements.

Although prospective adoptive parents may contact the Agency in response to an advertising campaign, we also receive direct enquiries from people who have heard of us and of our excellent reputation.

We aim to capitalise on the publicity generated by events such as National Adoption Week and any relevant TV programmes which may have a positive impact upon recruitment.

We attend specialist and community events in order to provide adoption information to those interested in adopting.

### *Preparation and Assessment*

The Agency seeks to recruit, assess and prepare prospective adopters for children referred by Local Authorities and other agencies. Nugent Adoption, in collaboration with the IAC (Intercountry adoption Centre) also provides an inter-country adoption service.

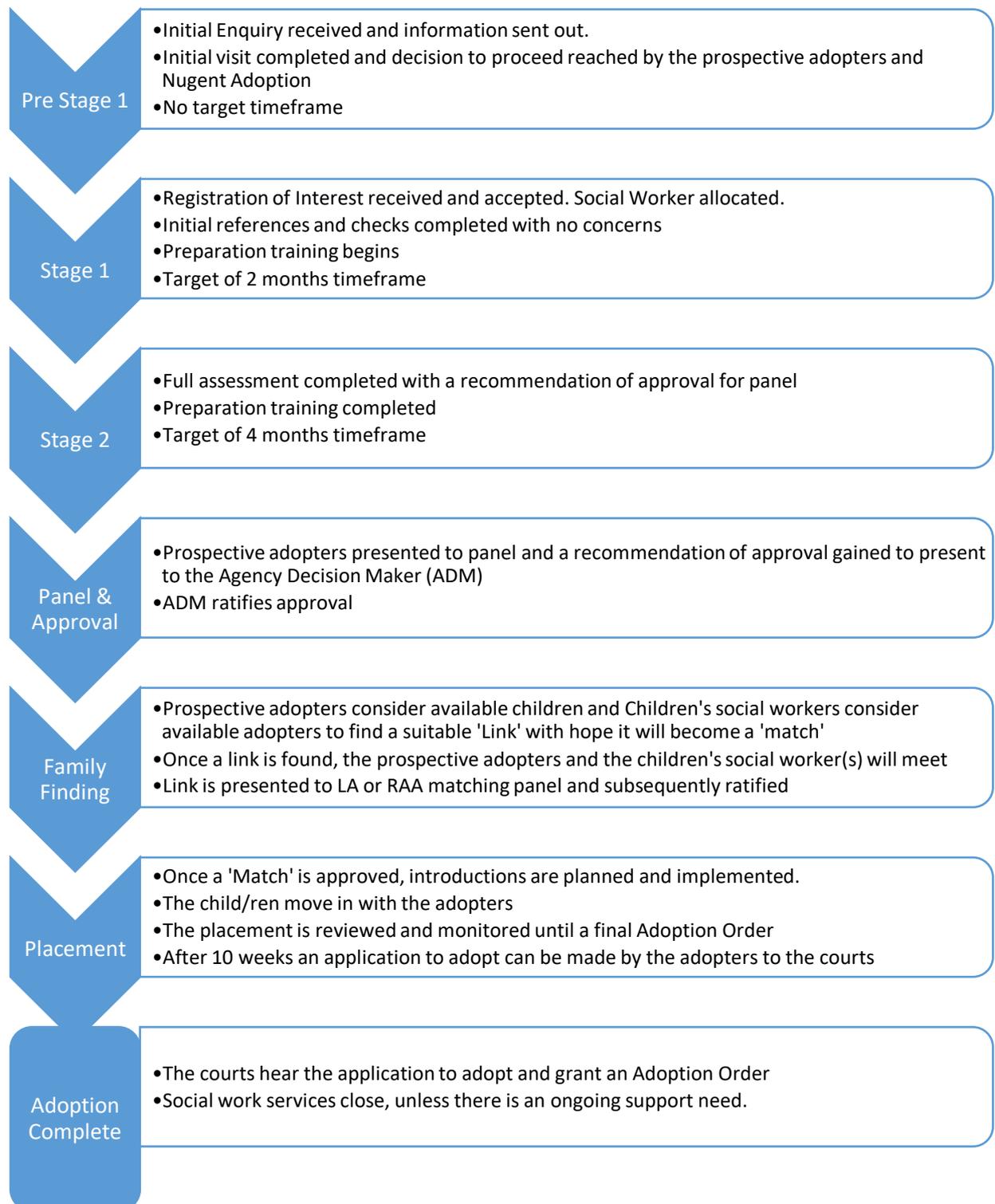
### *The Adoption process*

The adoption process is straightforward, but like anything which needs to be done thoroughly, it takes time and commitment. Adoption is a two stage process: Stage One allows for the gathering of suitability checks on a potential applicant including an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check [DBS], references and a Medical. If appropriate an application for assessment is then accepted and the applicant moves into Stage Two: the assessment phase.

Our target is to complete the Stage One of the work within 2 months of accepting a Registration of Interest and then a further 4 months after accepting a formal application to move into Stage Two. The actual time to complete the whole process can be extended at the applicants' request.

Detailed information on what happens at each stage of the assessment process is available on request in our Information Pack.

## The Adoption Process – A Basic guide



The Basic approval process with more detail:

- **Pre Stage 1** – An initial enquiry is received, basic details are gathered about the prospective adopter(s), initial questions are dealt with and information packs are sent out.
- Contact is made with enquirers to check they have received the information pack, any further questions are responded to and, if the enquirer wishes to pursue their interest, an arrangement will be made to undertake a home visit and/or an invitation will be given to attend an information meeting.
- **Stage One** - If both the Adoption Service and the enquirer think it appropriate, the Adoption Service will accept a Registration of Interest, a social worker will be allocated and the information gathering phase can begin.
- Statutory checks, references and medicals are completed and the applicants attend Preparation Sessions. These can either be provided in a group setting or individual delivery sessions at the service users' home if required. A Health and Safety check of the home and pet assessments as required are completed. Applicants begin to assemble factual documentation in readiness for their home study assessment.
- At the completion of Stage One a decision is made about whether the applicant should progress into a formal application and assessment. The applicants can request a pause of up to 6 months in the process at this point if required.
- **Stage Two & Approval** – A formal application is accepted and the home study begins. Applicants are seen together [if a couple] and also separately. Other adults who live in the household are also interviewed as are children already living with the applicants, along with at least 3 referees (4 if adopting as a couple) nominated by the prospective adopter/s. Interviews are also undertaken as appropriate with previous long term partners/spouses and children of the applicant living elsewhere.
- Once adopters are in stage 2, the 'family finding' process begins and an appropriate 'match' with a child is sought. It is important to remember that the needs of the children are our paramount consideration and finding the right placement may take time.
- On completion of the assessment, applicants are invited to attend the Adoption Panel where their application will be discussed and a recommendation made.
- The Agency Decision Maker will make the final decision on the application.

## **Complaints**

Nugent is committed to providing the best possible service to all. We welcome your views about the service you receive and we encourage feedback.

If service users are unhappy about any aspect of the service they have received, there are a number of routes which can be followed to seek a resolution.

Nugent has a clear Complaints Procedure which can be used to bring concerns to our attention. Leaflets about the Complaints Procedure are available on request from all our work sites. You can also telephone or write to us for a copy. Details are also available on our website.

Should any user of the Adoption Service be unhappy or dissatisfied with the service provided, they should, in the first instance, contact: -

### ***Registered Adoption Manager***

Jo Lloyd

Nugent Adoption

6 Chain Lane

St Helens

WA11 9RA

Telephone: 01744 613041

Email: [Jo.Lloyd@wearenugent.org](mailto:Jo.Lloyd@wearenugent.org)

General: [adoption@wearenugent.org](mailto:adoption@wearenugent.org)

### ***Responsible Individual***

Alternatively, please contact, the Responsible Individual via Nugent's Governance Team.

Susan Cuffe

The Governance Team

Nugent,

99 Edge Lane,

Liverpool

L7 2PE

Telephone: 0151 261 2000

Email: [governance@wearenugent.org](mailto:governance@wearenugent.org)

Website: [www.wearenugent.org](http://www.wearenugent.org)

## Other contacts

### *The Independent Review Mechanism*

The Independent Review Mechanism is a national body which consider concerns regarding adoption. Leaflets are available on request and are included in our Preparation Pack. Please check their criteria for dealing with complaints as they will only become involved after stage 2 of the adoption process. Their contact details are:

Contract Manager,  
Independent Review Mechanism (IRM)  
Unit 4,  
Pavilion Business Park,  
Royds Hall Road,  
Wortley,  
LEEDS  
LS12 6AJ

Telephone: 0113 202 2080 or 0845 450 3956

Fax: 0113 263 7414 or 0845 450 3957

E-mail: [irm@baaf.org.uk](mailto:irm@baaf.org.uk)

Website: [www.irm-adoption.org.uk](http://www.irm-adoption.org.uk)

### *Ofsted*

Nugent Adoption is registered with Ofsted, Unique Registration Number (URN): SC049079

Ofsted are the organisation which registers and inspects our Adoption Service and you can also raise any concerns you have with them.

Their contact details are:

OFSTED  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

E-mail: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Website: [www.ofsted.gov](http://www.ofsted.gov)

### *The Office of the Children's Commissioner*

We will seek to identify an Independent Advocate for any child placed for adoption by the Service, upon the request of the child, his/her parents or other relative, prospective adopters, or other professional.

If children have concerns, they can also contact the Children's Commissioner for England. Her name is Dame Rachel de Souza, she can be contacted at:

The Office of the Children's Commissioner

Sanctuary Buildings

20 Great Smith Street

London

SW1P 3BT

Telephone: 020 7783 8330

Email: [info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov).

There is also a special freephone advice line for children - 0800 528 0731

And a special e-mail for children: [advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

# Safeguarding Children – Adoption Specific

## Legislative and regulatory context of safeguarding children who are being adopted:

- [The National Minimum Standards for Adoption 2014](#)
- [The Adoption Agencies \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Adoption Agencies and Independent Review of Determinations \(amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Children Act 2004](#)
- [The Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Safeguarding Children and young People from Sexual Exploitation 2009](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [The Adoption and Children Act 2002](#)
- [The Adoption \(Intercountry Aspects\) Act 1999](#)
- [Children and Adoption Act 2006](#)
- [The Adoption and Children \(Coronavirus\) \(Amendment\) \(No.2\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

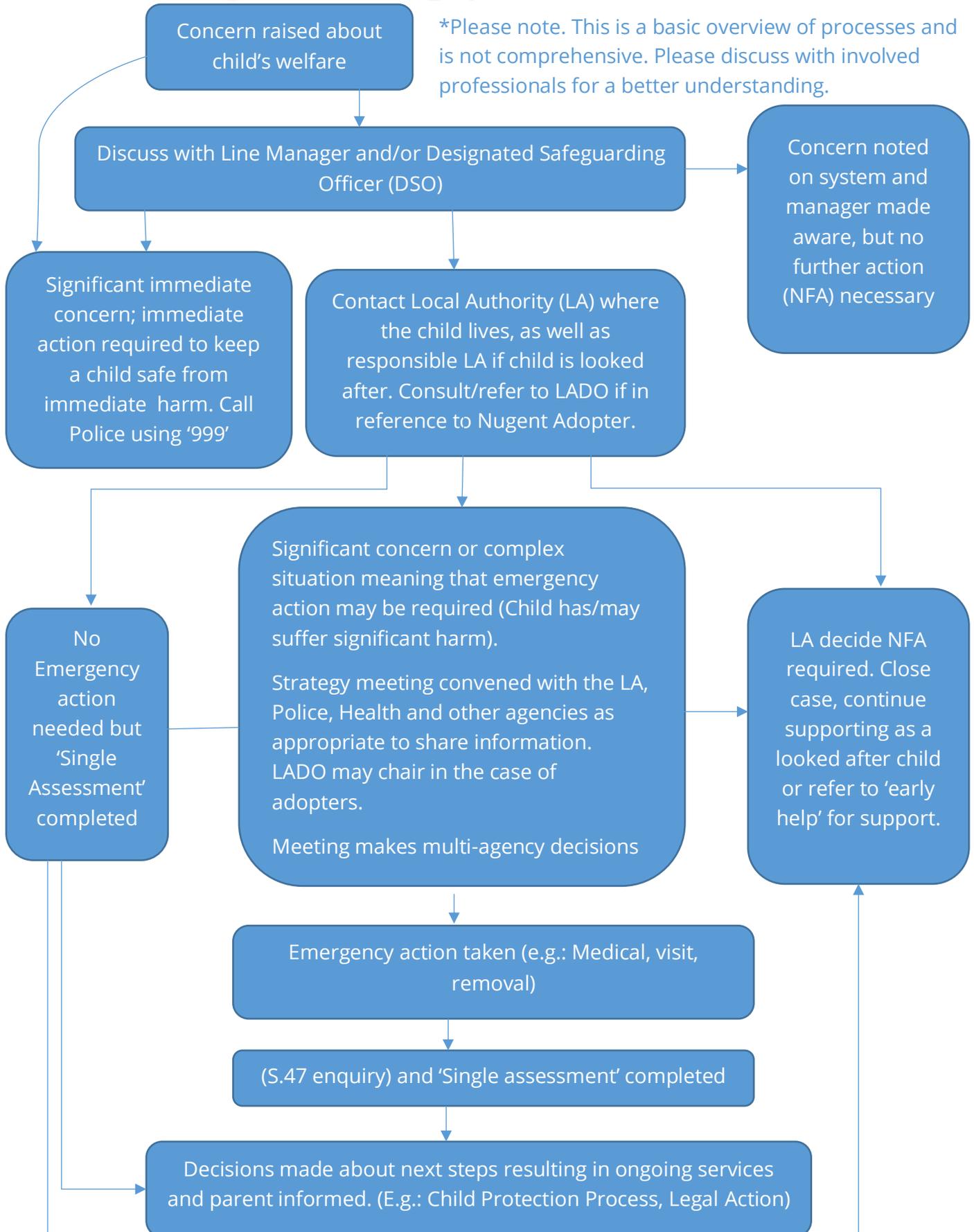
## Allegations Against Prospective Adopters

Nugent Adoption recognises that within adoption, all workers, foster carers and adopters could fall under the remit of a Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) should a concern be raised in respect of them and additional processes may follow. The LADO Process and procedure for St Helen's Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership as well as a flowchart for the possible need to refer to the DBS, Ofsted and more can be found in Nugent's "[Safeguarding Strategy, policy & procedure](#)" pages 31 – 39.

Much of this process is covered in the wider Safeguarding policy, but Nugent recognises that Adopters are not employees or professionals working with a child. As such, allegations may be even more distressing and upsetting and have a lasting impact on the family in a way that other settings within the organisation would not see. Aspects such as referrals to the LADO may have an even more far-reaching impact and Nugent understands the need to support adopters in this time, regardless of actions or outcome. The Adoption team will work closely with Adopters to explain the process and what is happening and any questions should be answered as quickly and fully as possible, but a basic overview flow of this process to show actions is as follows:

# Safeguarding process flowchart

\*Please note. This is a basic overview of processes and is not comprehensive. Please discuss with involved professionals for a better understanding.



## **Non-recent abuse (Historic Allegations)**

Whilst this could apply to the wider Nugent services, the long-lived nature of the Adoption provision requires a need for more information to be included above what is mentioned in the [Nugent Safeguarding policy](#). This wider policy must continue to be followed.

### *Definition*

Non-recent abuse is an allegation of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse made by or on behalf of someone who is 18 years or over, relating to an incident which took place when the alleged victim was under 18 years old. Allegations can be made by:

- An adult, making an allegation of abuse when they were under 18 years of age, that occurred at least one year before it was reported
- A child making an allegation of abuse that occurred at least one year before it was reported
- An individual who reports an allegation, on behalf of another child or adult, that occurred at least one year before it was reported

Nugent recognises that whilst the abuse is historic, the action taken must be no less swift than in cases where a concern may be current.

### *Why is the policy important?*

In recent years, there have been increasing reports of child abuse in several institutions e.g. in BBC premises, the NHS, in children's homes, religious institutions and in schools. Allegations particularly of sexual offending involving children have been made against people in prominent positions in public life e.g. those in the media. Those with experience in this specialist field believe there are likely to be further victims who have not felt able to come forward for the following reasons:

- Fear of reprisals
- The degree of control exercised by the abuser
- Shame or fear that the allegation may not be believed
- Unable to before but now aware that the abuser is being investigated for a similar matter.

An allegation of this nature can be received by any individual working for Nugent Adoption. Non-recent abuse allegations could be made against relatives, friends, carers, people in public prominence and/or a position of trust, or any other person who currently has, or previously had contact with children, young people or adults at risk. Disclosures normally, but not always, take place when the victim is no longer in circumstances where they consider themselves at risk from the perpetrator. When an allegation is received action must be taken because:

- The alleged abuse may not have been an isolated incident. It might be current and be perpetrated by the same person or someone else

- It comes to light that the non-recent abuse is part of a wider setting of institutional or organised abuse
- There is a probable likelihood that a person who abused a child/ren in the past may still be doing so
- The perpetrator may still be working with or caring for child/ren
- Criminal prosecutions may still take place even though the allegations are historic in nature and may have taken place many years ago.

*Receiving an allegation of non-recent abuse*

[Nugent Safeguarding policy](#) details general guidance on how to respond to allegations of abuse.

Please see the following flow chart for an overview of how to respond to non-recent abuse allegations. Please note that within this process the purpose of this is to have the factual information of the allegations to report – not to investigate the allegations. Whilst the reporter will not be a child, being mindful of the '[Achieving Best Evidence](#)' principles is recommended.

Should the concern relate to a person of any public prominence, consideration about a referral to '[Operation Hydrant](#)',

# Non-recent abuse flowchart

Non-recent abuse Concerns raised. Worker must try where possible to ascertain:

- Name and contact details of the person making the allegation.
- Name & identifying information of the individual who the allegation is about
- Name of any children involved
- Date and time
- Key information about the nature of the non-recent abuse allegation
- Establish, where possible, if the alleged perpetrator is still working with or caring for children
- Establish whether other agencies are involved

Discuss with line manager and/or designated safeguarding officer (DSO) (same day)

Nugent Adoption is working with the service user

Nugent Adoption is not working with the service user

Refer to children's service and/or the Police and LADO as necessary. Continue to provide service where possible

If allegation relates to current employee or volunteer. Refer to disciplinary and safeguarding process as needed, including further referrals about fitness to

Refer to children's service and/or the Police and LADO as necessary. Non-recent abuse allegation should not impact upon possible entitlement and access to a service should they want this

Work with any police or children's services safeguarding process as required.

Keep manager and DSO updated with any changes.

Work with any police or children's services safeguarding process as required.

Keep manager and DSO updated with any changes.

Manager/DSO to escalate if needed to consider publicity and impact (within GDPR guidance)

Write up contemporaneous case notes as soon as possible and record updates on electronic systems