



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

(Reviewed June 2021)

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Confidentiality
3. Understanding abuse
4. How might we notice abuse?
5. FDCW's Commitment to Safe Practice
6. Code of behaviour
7. Procedures for Responding to Allegations & Concerns
8. Procedures Flow Chart
9. Information Sharing Flow Chart
10. Guiding principles for Care and Support
11. Useful contacts – local and national
12. Safeguarding Investigation Record

PEOPLE DESIGNATED FOR SAFEGUARDING:

The FDCW Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP) are Victoria Coleman and Wendy Ridley.

You can contact them on: safeguarding@compassionandwisdom.org.

1. INTRODUCTION

The FPMT Protection from Abuse Policy is incorporated into this safeguarding policy. Where the FDCW policy refers to Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP), in the FPMT policy, this is synonymous with Designated Protection Person (DPP).

OUR COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING FROM ABUSE AND HARM

FDCW is committed to protecting people from harm and abuse. Everyone associated with FDCW has a right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse and spiritual abuse.

We will ensure that all staff, consultants, facilitators and volunteers (such as Board members) work together, in line with this Safeguarding Policy, and act promptly when dealing with any allegations, suspicions, or evidence of abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY

We will work together to prevent and minimise the risk of abuse or harm. If we have concerns or have been informed that someone is at risk of being abused or harmed or has been abused or harmed, our first duty is to the child or adult concerned.

DOING NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION

If we know or suspect that someone is at risk, we will respond and ensure our concerns are properly recorded. We will respond according to this policy and other procedures.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS –TELL A DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING PERSON

2. CONFIDENTIALITY

FDCW is committed to respecting the right to confidentiality of everyone attending its courses and events.

Sometimes it is necessary to share information to ensure a person's safety and wellbeing or to comply with law enforcement regulations. Under FDCW's Confidentiality Policy, staff, facilitators, consultants, and volunteers who are informed by a person at risk of harm, or are made aware of circumstances in which someone is at risk, may need to share sensitive information in order to take practical steps to protect the person at risk. These circumstances include:

- If the participant is under 18 and they disclose information that may indicate risk to themselves or other children;
- If an adult discloses past child abuse and it is possible that children or young people are currently at risk from the abuser;
- If a staff member, facilitator, consultant or volunteer believes that a participant could cause danger to themselves or to others;
- If the participant gives information that indicates that a crime has been committed;
- If the participant gives information that indicates a possible terrorist threat.

In any of these cases, the person at risk will be informed that the disclosure they are making may not be kept confidential. If a decision has to be taken to break confidentiality, it will be done only after consultation with a DSP and the Executive Director. Any disclosure will be shared internally or with external agencies as required while respecting the person's privacy as much as possible.

3. UNDERSTANDING ABUSE

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or group of people.

Abuse may be single or repeated episodes. It is not only harming somebody; it also includes neglect of their basic needs or failure to protect them from harm.

Examples include:

- **Physical:** for example, hitting, slapping, pushing, restraining, uninvited touching, female genital mutilation, domestic abuse or intimate partner violence.
- **Psychological and emotional:** for example, shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliating a person, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, verbal abuse, gaslighting, coercive control or forced marriage.
- **Financial:** including the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money or other valuables, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance.
- **Sexual:** such as forcing a person to take part in any sexual activity without his or hers informed consent. It can include sexual violence, child sexual abuse or exploitation or knowingly risking infecting someone with a sexually transmitted disease.
- **Discriminatory:** including racist or sexist remarks or comments based on a person's age, race, sex, national origin, disability, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, medical condition or illness, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. This also includes stopping someone from being involved in other cultural activity, services or support networks.
- **Modern slavery:** The recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation. It may involve trafficking individuals in or out of the UK for a number of reasons including sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude and organ harvesting.
- **Institutional:** the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service, especially to vulnerable people. This includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect people and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping and liaising with other providers.
- **Misuse of spiritual authority or power.** This can take the form of all the abuses listed above. All forms of abuse have the potential to cause damage to the individual's emergent spirituality. Holding a spiritual position or role involves differing power relationships and imbalances and these need to be recognised to respect the autonomy or rights of the individual.
- Some abuse is **spiritual** abuse because of the context it occurs in or where it invokes status as a teacher or someone of higher spiritual authority, or uses religious teachings to coerce or manipulate people into performing behaviours which meet the needs of the abuser rather than those of the individual concerned. In some cases, it may be well intentioned rather than malicious, but nevertheless is harmful, as it overrides the respect of an autonomous individual's rights to make informed choices regarding their own lives and spiritual practices, for example due to fear, shame, or humiliation. At the extreme end, this could lead to cult like control where individual autonomy and open inquiry are suppressed. Or it could lead to the creation of actual cults, which are exclusive, secretive, authoritarian, deceptive and exploitative.

4. HOW MIGHT WE NOTICE HARM OR ABUSE?

Concerns about or evidence of abuse or harm can come to us through:

1. A direct disclosure by the person concerned.
2. A complaint or expression of concern by a volunteer, a course participant, a member of the public or relative.
3. An observation of the behaviour of the person at risk.

It is important that staff, facilitators, volunteers, course participants and members of the public know who to contact if there are any safeguarding concerns about FDCW. Concerns may be communicated to the Designated Safeguarding Persons at safeguarding@compassionandwisdom.org.

5. FDCW's COMMITMENT TO SAFE PRACTICE

FDCW is committed to:

- Identifying any abuse and harm.
- Responding effectively to any concerns and formal complaints.
- Creating a safe space for everyone attending its courses, public forums, or offices.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of our policies, procedures and practices for protecting people.
- Ensuring that our policies, procedures and practices stay up to date with good practice and the law in relation to safeguarding.

FDCW will use various channels to inform everyone who the designated safeguarding persons are and how to contact them, along with how to access this policy.

Facilitators, course participants, staff and volunteers are entitled to respect and protection from harm. We aim to give everyone a positive and rewarding experience. In the event participation in a FDCW course or event brings underlying issues to the surface or reveals some form of mental or emotional disability, the facilitator or DSP may recommend that the course participant seek suitable professional support. We aim to respond and offer support in such circumstances.

It is important for both facilitators and course participants to appreciate the limits of the facilitator's role, time and skills. On some occasions a facilitator may need to suggest that a course participant seek suitable professional support.

Statutory and legal responsibilities

In the event of a serious incident involving children under 18 or 'adults at risk of harm' in the UK, FDCW will inform law enforcement or other agencies, to ensure protection from significant harm or abuse. FDCW Facilitators operating in all other countries are responsible for knowing their national guidelines.

(An adult at risk is defined as a person aged 18 years or over, who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.)

This policy covers not only children and adults at risk of harm, but also staff, volunteers and facilitators. The response to any incident may vary according to the legal guidance for different groups.

In the UK, the Care Quality Commission provides safeguarding regulations at:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/regulations-enforcement/regulation-13-safeguarding-service-users-abuse-improper#full-regulation>.

6. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR for all staff, volunteers and facilitators

Avoid:

- ❖ Spending time alone or making unnecessary physical contact with children or adults at risk.
- ❖ Arranging private meetings between course participants and facilitators anywhere other than in designated public meeting areas.
- ❖ Non-consensual touching in general.
- ❖ Meeting alone with children and adults at risk associated with FDCW outside of the work environment. This includes online.
- ❖ Investigative questioning after an allegation or concern has been raised. Instead, listen with an open mind in a caring manner. Then record the information and report it to a Safeguarding Person, who will notify the appropriate authorities if required.

You should never (even in fun):

- ❖ Initiate or engage in sexually provocative conversations or activity.
- ❖ Allow the use of inappropriate language to go unchallenged.
- ❖ Do things of a personal nature for children or adult at risks that they can do themselves.
- ❖ Trivialise or exaggerate child or adult at risk abuse issues.
- ❖ Allow any allegations made by a child or adult to go without being reported and addressed.
- ❖ Make promises to keep any disclosure confidential from relevant authorities.

Regarding all your relationships within FDCW:

- ❖ Respect everyone's right to privacy.
- ❖ Help create a culture in which everyone feels able to report any experience of harmful attitudes or behaviour.
- ❖ Act with discretion with regards to your personal relationships. Ensure your personal relationships do not undermine harmony or impact on your capacity for impartiality.
- ❖ Be aware that conflicts of interest can arise, leading to misunderstandings. This can happen particularly where there is an imbalance of power or close personal relationship. If such a situation arises it is important to discuss it with the Executive Director.
- ❖ Be aware of the procedures for reporting concerns or incidents and how to contact a Designated Safeguarding Person.
- ❖ If you find yourself the subject of inappropriate affection or attention it is essential to tell a Designated Safeguarding Person.
- ❖ Report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Persons. If neither is available tell the Executive Director.
- ❖ Maintain appropriate boundaries with others. Be aware of the scope of your role and when necessary, pass information to those whose role it is to deal with specific matters.
- ❖ Be careful not to give personal advice to individuals that goes beyond your expertise or role. Respond with empathy and kindness, rather than being drawn into giving expert advice.
- ❖ Study, sign and abide by the FDCW ethical policy.

7. PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS AND CONCERNS

Under no circumstances should a staff member, facilitator or volunteer carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than Designated Safeguarding Persons. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

Receiving, responding and reporting an allegation or concern

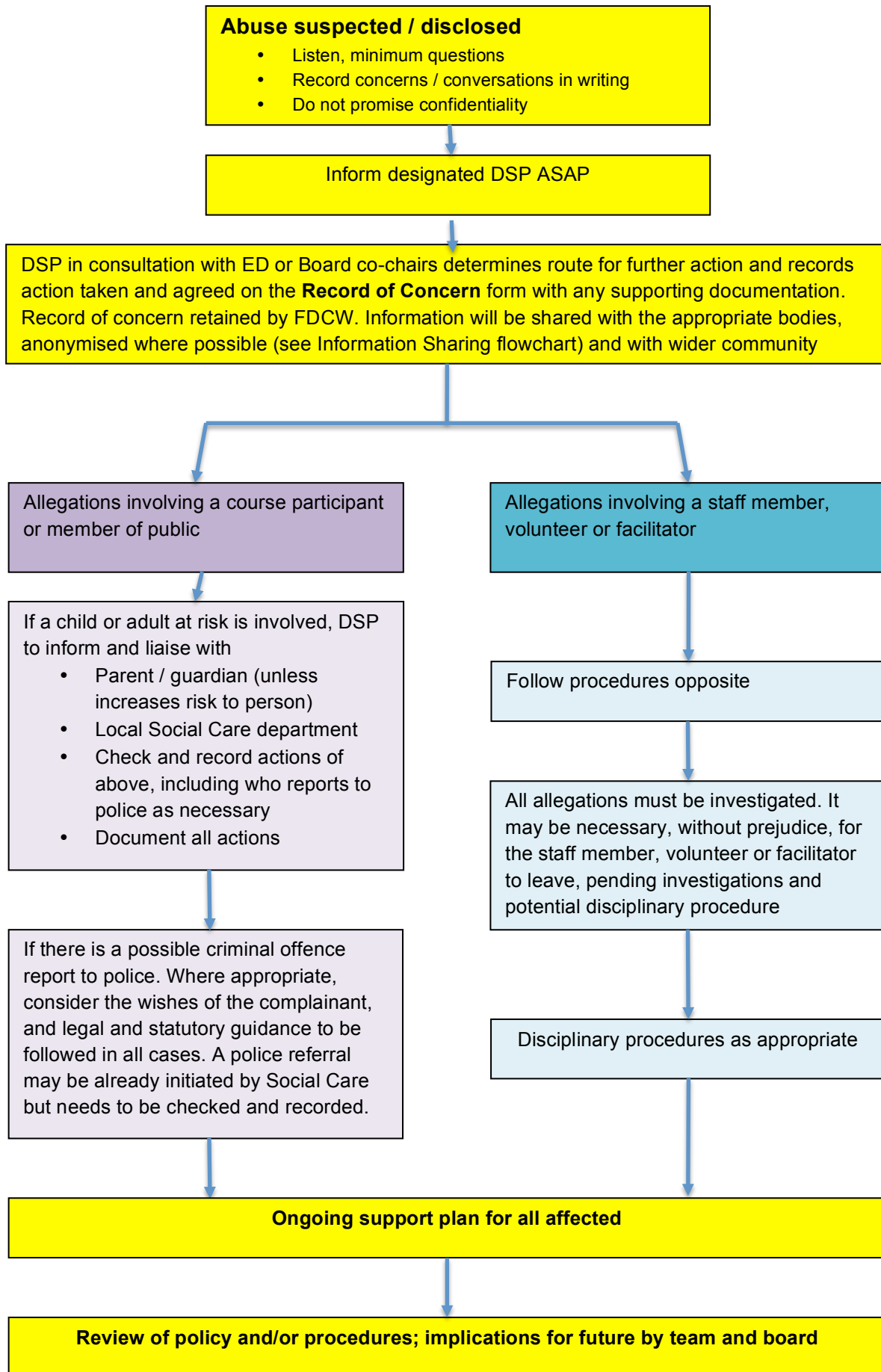
- Never promise unconditional confidentiality.
- Explain that if the person expressing the concern may have been abused or be at risk of abuse you may need to tell someone. Explain the role of a Designated Safeguarding Person.
- Listen very carefully.
- Only ask questions to clarify your understanding.
- Do not ask searching questions – this could compromise a future investigation.
- Offer reassurance and thank the person for telling you.
- Tell the person you will try to get them the help they need.
- Explain what you will do, e.g. you will tell a Designated Safeguarding Person.

Allegations against team members

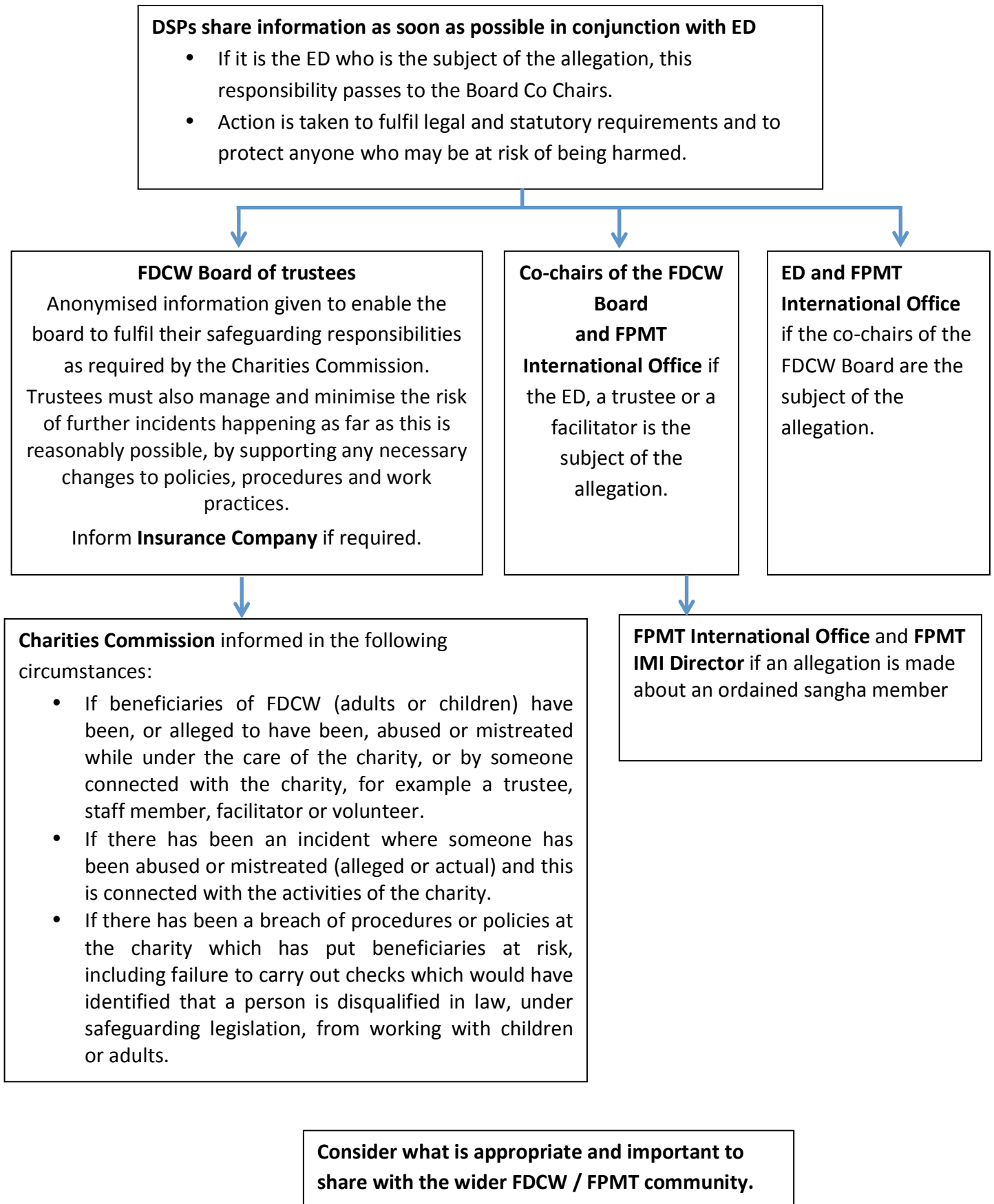
If an allegation is made against a staff member whilst following the procedure outlined above, this must be reported immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Person (unless they are the subject of the allegation) and the Executive Director (unless they are the subject of the allegation).

Any allegations or concerns regarding the Executive Director, Board members or registered facilitators must be reported to FPMT Centre Services Director.

8. PROCEDURES FLOWCHART



9. INFORMATION SHARING DURING / FOLLOWING AN INVESTIGATION



10. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR CARE AND SUPPORT

FDCW is committed to offering care and support (working with statutory agencies as appropriate) to all those who have been affected by abuse. This may include the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator. Support may be needed for the staff, facilitator, volunteers and wider FDCW community also.

- Prioritise the wellbeing and safety of all who come into contact with FDCW.
- Never promise to keep anything reported confidential. It should be explained at the outset that any disclosure will be shared internally or with external agencies as required whilst respecting the person's privacy as much as possible.
- For the purposes of recording, it is important to listen. Questions should be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged, and leading questions avoided. The use of leading questions can cause problems for any subsequent investigation and court proceedings.
- All those involved should take great care in reaching conclusions and making decisions. Regarding sharing information within FDCW, confidentiality and privacy of all the individuals concerned should be protected as appropriate and feasible. When the process is complete, consideration should be given to what is appropriately shared with the wider FDCW community.
- Whatever action you may have to take, and even if the authorities are involved, don't lose sight of the person or persons at the centre of the concern. Ensure that there is someone to whom they can turn for support after any allegation or investigation. If they give further information, then go through the process of listening and recording as already described.
- When working with adults at risk, their wishes, feelings and mental capacity must be taken into account and people should be supported to make their own decisions and encouraged to give informed consent when possible and safety considerations permit.
- Be aware that although the particular individual that has disclosed abuse may now be safe and protected, it is important to think about the potential risk to others from the alleged perpetrator. If the matter is serious, inform the appropriate agencies as required, and also pass information to those who may need be aware in order to protect others, such as FPMT national coordinator and FPMT Centre Directors where relevant.
- It is important to think carefully how best to maximise everyone's rights to privacy as much as is feasible. There will be people with whom information needs to be shared. In many cases this could be anonymised, and the person's name only be shared with those where this is essential. Consider carefully what is shared by email, particularly bearing in mind GDPR considerations, and anonymise where feasible or encrypt and password protect documents with names of alleged perpetrators and those who have been harmed.
- FDCW staff, facilitators and volunteers need to make clear decisions to promote the wellbeing and safety of all they come into contact with. It is important to maintain equanimity towards all those involved in any allegation and at the same time ensure robust safeguarding procedures. Respect and compassion need to be shown to both the person harmed and the alleged perpetrator, and where appropriate and feasible, care and support given.

11. USEFUL UK CONTACTS

FDCW’s Designated Safeguarding Persons can be contacted at safeguarding@compassionandwisdom.org

UK NATIONAL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES:

Thirtyone:eight

PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ:

Helpline: 0303 003 11 11

Email: info@thirtyoneeight.org

Thirtyone:eight advise faith groups and a variety of statutory and third sector organisations with safeguarding concerns. They have a 24 hour advice helpline and offer training and other resources.

An Olive Branch www.an-olive-branch.org

An Olive Branch was formed in 2011 as a project of the Zen Center of Pittsburgh. Growing out of the need for greater understanding and reduction of ethical misconduct on the part of religious leaders, they provide services to organizations in conflict after a spiritual teacher has been accused of misconduct. In the USA they promote understanding and healing and work to strengthen organisations’ boards and policies to reduce the likelihood of future misconduct. They have some information and resources available on their website.

NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk> 24 hour child protection helpline 0808 800 500

ChildLine: <https://www.childline.org.uk> Free and confidential number 0800 1111

Childline helps anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they’re going through.

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) has closed and is now a part of the Disclosure and Barring Service Helpline – 03000 200 190 customerservices@dbb.gov.uk

Charity Commission: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission> 0300 066 9197 or email directly via the contact link on their website.

Policy approval:	Approved by: FDCW Board Date: 7 June 2021
Policy review date:	June 2023
Policy availability	Internally: Emailed to all FDCW trustees, staff, facilitators & volunteers. Externally: This policy will be available to view on the FDCW website.
Policy linkage	Other relevant policies/procedures/forms relevant to this policy are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FDCW Ethical Policy • FDCW Confidentiality Policy

Safeguarding Investigation Record

STATUS: OPEN OR CLOSED

Name of the subject of the report	
Contact information	
Person initiating the concern	
Concern or incident (information received)	
Date, time and location	
Any relevant additional information	

<p>Action taken immediately and by whom (<i>to be completed by DSP to whom the report was made</i>)</p>	
<p>Follow-up plan (<i>to be completed by DSP and the ED</i>) State clearly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. who is responsible for each action; 2. if other agencies were required to be contacted and when this was done; 3. status (i.e. open or closed); 4. who will receive a copy of this form. 	
<p>Name: [print]</p> <p>DSP Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>	

One copy retained confidentially by FDCW: duration according to legal advice.

Anonymised copy created by removing identifying details sent to co-chairs of the FDCW board to confidentially share with the trustees.