

Safeguarding Statement, Policy, Procedures, and Codes of Conduct

June 2022

Contents

Section	Description	Page
	Policy	
1	Safeguarding Statement	3
1	Introduction	4
2	Scope	4
3	Purpose	4
4	Values and beliefs	5
5	Our responsibilities and commitments.	5
	Procedures	
6	Purpose	7
7	Scope	7
8	Governance & Oversight	7
9	Recruitment of Staff and volunteers	7
10	Ensuring and safe and healthy environment	9
11	Responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns and disclosures	9
12	Allegations against or concerns about LCF's staff or volunteers	10
13	Complaints about LCF processes or actions	12
14	Concerns about practice and whistleblowing	14
15	Appendices	15

Lawyers' Christian Fellowship

Our Safeguarding Statement

We want everyone who comes into contact with us to feel safe, valued and cared for. We believe that each and every person is made in the image of God, and as a result have an inherent dignity and worth. We also recognise that we live in a sinful world, where human beings rebel against God and his ways for us, and harm one another in innumerable ways. We believe that the human heart is wicked and deceitful and that we are all capable of falling into sin.

We believe in the good news that God offers us forgiveness and new life if we will receive Jesus Christ as our saviour and Lord. We believe that when we submit to God and allow him to work in us by his Holy Spirit, we will grow in our faith and gradually become more like Jesus. Our greatest purpose and joy is to be in relationship with God, and to know his transforming work within us that gives us the power to change and become more Christlike; living lives that glorify God.

The Lawyers' Christian Fellowship is a place where the love of God for each and every person is displayed and where we live, learn, and grow together in our faith. This involves supporting, encouraging, and even challenging and rebuking one another when we sin; all for the glory of God and for our individual and mutual good. We believe that God sees everything and that he knows even our secret and hidden sins and that one day each of us will stand before him as our judge.

As we journey and grow together in this life of faith, we recognise that we are not perfect and that at various times we will all have to both offer and seek forgiveness from others. We do, however recognise that within LCF there could be the opportunity for individuals or groups to harm, abuse, or exploit others. We as LCF wish to stand against any misuse of power, abuse, or exploitation. We all have a responsibility to care for and protect each member of our community, but particularly those who are weaker or more vulnerable.

If you have any concerns about the way that you, or anyone else has been treated, or about anything that we do as LCF please speak to one of our Safeguarding Officers or one of our Trustees. You can find out who they are by reading our safeguarding policy and procedures, which are available on our website.

We take safeguarding seriously and we work with local and national organisation to help us to do all we can to keep everyone safe. We will fulfil all our legal duties to protect both children and Adults at Risk of Abuse, but we aim to go above and beyond and to discharge our safeguarding duties in a way that is biblically faithful and pleasing to our loving heavenly Father, who calls us to do justice, love mercy and to walk humbly before him.

We commit to speaking to you openly and honestly if we have any concerns that you need to know about. If you have any concerns or require any support of help, please do not hesitate to speak to someone that you trust within LCF.

Lawyers' Christian Fellowship

Safeguarding Policy:

1. Introduction

1.1. Context

1.2. The Lawyers' Christian Fellowship is an association of over 1,500 Christian lawyers and law student members. The LCF through its charitable objects promotes the Christian faith particularly in the legal profession, and seeks to relieve poverty in accordance with the Christian faith primarily by supporting access to justice work.

1.3. Safeguarding

1.3.1. The LCF supports Christians who work in the legal sector to live out their calling with integrity and in a way that gives glory to God. While we do not work directly with vulnerable people, we recognise that in the course of our ministry, we may come into contact with vulnerable groups. We also recognise that safeguarding is a broad range of activities that interrsect and interfaces with some of our activities. We believe that we should go above and beyond the minimum legal standards in this regard and that in our care for others, we should strive for the highest of standards.

2. Scope

2.1. This policy covers all aspects of the ministry and work of the Lawyers' Christian Fellowship (LCF). It applies to everyone who works on our behalf, whether trustees, staff, volunteers, or others who from time to time may represent us.

2.2. This policy is based on English law, but the LCF shall adhere to such different legislation as is in force from time to time in the devolved nations of the United Kingdom in its operations in those countries.

3. Purpose

This policy with its appendices and related procedures and other documents outlines how we will:

3.1. Ensure that we provide a healthy, nurturing, and protective environment for our staff, volunteers, others who work on our behalf, beneficiaries and anyone else who engages with LCF, and that they are protected from bullying, harassment, exploitation, and abuse

3.2. Ensure that if we identify abuse during our ministry, it is handled effectively, promptly, and proportionately

3.3. Ensure that our trustees, staff, and others who work on our behalf are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities and duties and are supported to fulfil them competently and confidently

3.4. Support the development of an open and transparent culture that listens to the views and wishes of our staff, members, and beneficiaries, which supports the raising of concerns and complaints and ensures that they are handled biblically and in an open, carefully rigorous, transparent, and appropriately accountable manner.

4. Values and beliefs

4.1. Everyone who engages with our Charity has the right to be protected from any form of bullying or harassment, exploitation or abuse and we will seek to ensure that we provide a caring and nurturing environment that is open and transparent and that promotes the raising of concerns

4.2. In light of the position that we hold, we believe that it is our responsibility to provide leadership by example and to encourage our members to strive to excel in the protection of those who are vulnerable, the promotion of their wellbeing, and the creation of healthy and nurturing environments across all pf our ministry

4.3. Everyone who acts on our behalf, in any capacity, has a responsibility to act to support the values and commitments outlined in this policy

4.4. Our approach to safeguarding is shaped by our belief as Christians that:

4.4.1. We are to honour the authorities that God has set over us and to live as responsible and good citizens in the time and place that God has set us, living as God would have us live, setting a good example to those around us

4.4.2. Every human life is valuable to God and each person bears his image

4.4.3. That justice and mercy are reflections of God's character and that his people should be increasingly conformed to his likeness and act in line with his heart for the weak, vulnerable, oppressed, abused, and exploited

4.4.4. We live in a fallen and sinful world, where there are many risks and dangers and we must seek to protect everyone, but particularly the vulnerable in our midst from those dangers

4.4.5. God cares for the widow, the orphan, and the stranger; he calls us to protect and care for those who are vulnerable in our society and to oppose exploitation

4.4.6. Jesus' example was one of valuing, accepting, and caring about everyone and we are to follow his example; loving those around us as God loves them and to seeking to bring healing, restoration, and reconciliation to broken and damaged lives by the manifestation of the love of God through us

4.4.7. That we are to bear witness to the truth as revealed by God in the Scriptures, speaking truth in love and with all gentleness, loving our enemies and praying for those who persecute us, and treating those with whom we disagree with respect and courtesy; acknowledging, respecting, and seeking to uphold the freedom of thought, practice, and expression of belief for all

4.4.8. That the Christian Gospel is advanced through example of life and by declaration of the message. It cannot be advanced by force or through violence, but by the Spirit of God who convicts and convinces; empowering those who submit to his authority to obedient life and ongoing transformation and greater conformity to the likeness of Christ

5. Our responsibilities and commitments

5.1. Our responsibilities

5.1.1. To develop and maintain a healthy organisational environment and culture that is protective, caring and nurturing of all who engage with the charity, whether staff, volunteers, or beneficiaries

5.1.2. To ensure that all who engage with us, whether in person or online, and particularly those who disagree with our theological or other positions, are treated with respect and courtesy and that their dignity is upheld

5.1.3. To ensure that our staff, volunteers, or others who act on our behalf operate in accordance with our policies, procedures and codes of conduct

5.1.4. To seek to ensure that our staff, volunteers, or others who act on our behalf are protected from bullying, harassment, abuse or exploitation from others outside the organisation

5.1.5. To ensure that we operate in an open, transparent, and accountable manner, listening to and taking seriously any allegations or concerns about our staff or volunteers or our systems and processes

5.1.6. To ensure that we have clear, proportionate, and appropriate policies and procedures for dealing with concerns and that we respond proportionately and in a timely manner if safeguarding concerns that meet statutory thresholds are identified

5.2. How we will seek to fulfil these responsibilities

5.2.1. We will ensure that those who are responsible for safeguarding at the various levels of the organisation are appropriately trained and supported to fulfil their role competently and confidently

5.2.2. We will ensure that we have robust and relevant policies, procedures and systems that support the culture of our organisation and the work of all those involved in safeguarding, and that these are reviewed for effectiveness at least annually

5.2.3. We will ensure that we appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead and at least one Deputy who will take responsibility for leading safeguarding across the organisation

5.2.4. Although LCF does not engage in regulated activity, safeguarding and the suitability of applicants will be considered when appointing to staff and volunteer positions

5.2.5. We will provide effective leadership, management and support to our staff and volunteers who deliver services on our behalf

5.2.6. We will ensure that our expectations in relation to the conduct of staff, volunteers and others who act on our behalf are clear through codes of conduct, policies and procedures including:

5.2.6.1. Anti-bullying and zero-tolerance approach to bullying; including cyber-bullying and the bullying of staff and leaders

5.2.6.2. Clear accountability processes and sanctions for infringements of the codes of conduct

5.2.6.3. Equality and diversity and a culture of zero-tolerance of discriminatory or abusive attitudes, language, or behaviours

5.2.7. We will seek to be vigilant and to identify concerns about the safety or wellbeing of those who engage with the charity and to address these appropriately and proportionately:

5.2.7.1. To signpost or refer them to local or national services that can help them

5.2.7.2. To provide information, guidance, and support as we are able, to help them overcome their challenges

5.2.7.3. To share information appropriately with statutory agencies where we have concerns about the safety of an individual and statutory thresholds and / or criteria are met

5.2.8. We will record and store information accurately, keeping it securely in line with our legal duties, information sharing policies and national and local guidance and agreements.

5.2.9. We will ensure that relevant policies, procedures, codes of conduct etc are publicly available

Lawyers' Christian Fellowship
Safeguarding Procedures

6. Purpose

These procedures aim to provide staff and volunteers with clear and simple instructions as to how safeguarding is promoted and how concerns should be handled. They are not provided for training purposes and will not be used as a substitute for training.

7. Scope

These procedures will be applied to all staff, volunteers and others who act on behalf of LCF

8. Governance and oversight

The trustees, will provide effective oversight of safeguarding across the charity by:

8.1. Ensuring that a proportionate and legally compliant safeguarding policy is in place and that it is reviewed by the trustees with input and support from the DSL at least annually, but more frequently as required

8.2. Ensuring that a suitably knowledgeable and appropriately skilled Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) is appointed and that they are adequately trained, supported and resourced

8.3. Ensuring that a comprehensive risk register is maintained on an ongoing basis

8.3.1. The risk register must cover all high-level strategic risks including data security and reputational risks

8.4. Ensuring that the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements is reviewed annually in line with the review of the policy and procedures

8.5. That role clarity is achieved through a clear definition of the responsibilities of all those involved in safeguarding across the charity (see appendix A)

9. Recruitment and ongoing support of staff and volunteers

The recruitment and support of staff and volunteers is important to LCF's work and ministry. In order to fulfil our legal duties and to ensure we meet the still higher standards dictated by scripture, all staff and volunteers will be subject to appropriate recruitment processes.

9.1. Management of recruitment processes

9.1.1. Since LCF does not engage in any direct or consistent ministry to children, young people or adults at risk of abuse, roles do not qualify for DBS Checks

9.1.2. Any events held by LCF where children are present, the regulated activity element will be commissioned to a church /organisation who will then be responsible for the running of the activity.

9.1.3. Care will be taken to ensure that staff and volunteers have an understanding of safeguarding as it relates to their role

9.1.4. An Excel spreadsheet containing a log of safeguarding training provided to staff and volunteers will be maintained

9.1.5. Staff and volunteers will be provided with written Job / role descriptions and person specifications

9.1.6. When overseas missions take place, volunteers don't have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults but volunteers will go through UFM's recruitment checks

9.2. Recruitment process

Prior to appointment, all staff and volunteers will be required to submit an application form (see appendix D). and to complete a self-declaration form

Paid staff positions

9.2.1. Recruitment of paid staff will involve a formal interview, obtaining references, and a formal induction process in accordance with the LCF's Recruitment Policy and Procedure.

Volunteer positions

9.2.2. Recruitment of volunteers will be subject to an interview and a volunteer agreement to establish suitability for the role and clarity about expectations and requirements.

Probationary periods

9.2.3. All staff and volunteers will be subject to a formal probationary period covering a 3-month period

Ongoing support and supervision

9.2.4. All staff and volunteers will receive proportionate supervision and pastoral care. Supervision will include both personal wellbeing and performance management

Training

9.2.5. Staff and volunteers are required to attend proportionate and relevant safeguarding training and to ensure that they understand the relevant policies and procedures including the safeguarding policy

9.2.5.1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy DSL are required to attend formal update training at least every two years

9.2.5.2. All staff, volunteers and trustees will undergo some informal update activity every three years

9.2.5.3. Training records will be held on an excel spreadsheet

LCF's theological positions have been clearly stated and are available on our website. These form part of the governing documents, and the Trustees are legally obliged to uphold these positions.

Given the nature of the work of LCF, in particular the fact that we do not work directly with vulnerable people, it is unlikely that we will have to deal with a high volume of safeguarding concerns. This poses particular challenges in relation to competence and vigilance. LCF has identified the following areas that may be of relevance to our safeguarding, and which will be included in our training:

- *Domestic abuse*
- *Organisational power dynamics*
- *The abuse of power or authority, including the misuse of scripture*
- *Manipulative coercive and / or controlling behaviours*
- *Bullying, intimidation, and harassment*
- *Responding to disclosures of historic abuse*
- *Understanding and responding well to victims of trauma*

10. Ensuring a safe and healthy environment

LCF fully recognises that there are many factors that impact on and contribute to the safety of the environment for everyone; some of these being procedural and others cultural. Here we describe only the procedural aspects.

For more information, please see our Health & Safety Policy

General provisions

10.1. The LCF will ensure that information relating to safeguarding, including contact details and other relevant information is prominently displayed in the building and online

10.2. Leaders will promote the need to be vigilant to safeguarding concerns through the processes, activities and culture of the charity and by personal example

11. Responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns and disclosures

Managing immediate risk

11.1. Upon identification of a concern or receipt of a disclosure, an assessment as to whether any immediate action is necessary to protect individuals involved such as requesting urgent medical attention or police presence

11.2. The worker may seek advice from the DSL; however, the seeking of advice should not unnecessarily delay or prevent the protective action or place the individual at risk of further or increased harm

11.3. In such urgent situations and if the DSL or Deputy DSL cannot be immediately contacted, the worker should contact the appropriate statutory service to obtain support. Under such circumstances, the DSL should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity

Reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

11.4. Once it has been established that the individual is not, or is no longer in imminent danger, the concern will be reported to the DSL

11.4.1. The concerns will be discussed with the DSL at the earliest opportunity, to ensure clarity of understanding

11.4.2. Details of the concern must be recorded on the "Incidents and concerns reporting form" (See appendix D) either before, during, or immediately after the discussion with the DSL

Managing the risks: the role of the DSL

11.5. In discussion with the person reporting the concern, the DSL will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for follow-up or further action that may be required

11.6. Upon receipt of the completed concern form, the DSL will establish a "Confidential File" in relation to the person at risk

11.6.1. A Chronology (See appendix D) will be established and inserted at the front of the confidential file

11.6.2. The confidential file will be updated with any further discussions or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis

11.6.2.1. The DSL will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned. The DSL will not provide any unnecessary information. Information is only shared on a "need to know" basis

11.7. Where the concern meets the statutory threshold, the DSL will, where appropriate, notify the parent or carer of the individual concerned (or the individual themselves if they are an adult) that a referral is being made to Social Care

11.7.1. Information will not be shared with the parent / carer in situations where:

11.7.1.1. To do so would place a child at increased risk of hard or neglect

11.7.1.2. To do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse

11.7.1.3. The concern relates to Fabricated or Induced Illness

11.7.2. The referral will be made to the appropriate Social Care service (See appendix B for contact details)

11.7.3. If the referral has not been acknowledged within 3 working days, the DSL will follow up with Children's Social Care

11.7.4. The DSL will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the charity to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process

11.7.5. All conversations, correspondence, and documentation etc will be placed into the confidential file and the "Record of action" and Chronology will be maintained on an ongoing basis

11.8. Confidential files will be stored {please complete}

11.9. The DSL will share information as necessary with other individuals in the charity to facilitate effective safeguarding

12. Allegations against or concerns about LCF staff and volunteers

LCF takes allegations against our staff and volunteers very seriously and will ensure that they are investigated thoroughly, via a transparent process that expedites the matter in a timely manner. We will seek to manage the process effectively and while the investigation takes place, we will seek to support the person accused in line with our legal responsibilities while also managing real, potential or perceived risks to others.

Anonymous allegations

12.1. Allegations that are made anonymously cannot be handled in the usual way and will generally be filed without full investigation.

12.2. Allegations that request a level of confidentiality that would compromise the integrity of an investigation, or its outcome will not be investigated, but may be addressed in general terms with the accused. They will generally be filed without full investigation

12.3. The LCF will not respond to allegations or complaints made in public space such as social media or other online or in-print publications. All allegations should be addressed to the LCF directly and the appropriate allegations / complaints processes invoked

12.4. Although anonymous allegations cannot, by definition, be handled in the usual way, the LCF will

12.4.1. Log the allegations

12.4.2. Seek to establish whether any pattern or consistency can be identified

12.4.3. Consider whether any form of investigation or action can and should be taken

External investigations

12.5. Concerns, complaints, and allegations will generally be investigated internally

12.6. In exceptional circumstances such as where LCF have concerns about the independence or competence of staff, or their capacity to conduct a timely investigation, LCF will consider whether it is appropriate to involve an independent external individual or organisation to assist with the investigation

12.7. Unless directed by a statutory or regulatory body to involve an independent, external body, the LCF will make such decisions. Advice can be sought from CSS or other sources, but this decision rests solely in the hands of LCF trustees and senior leaders

Procedure for handling allegations

12.8. Allegations against LCF staff or volunteers should be reported to the DSL

12.8.1. If the allegation is against the DSL, it should be reported to the Executive Director

12.9. Allegations can be raised in writing, or by prearranged discussion with the DSL. When arranging an appointment to discuss a complaint or allegation, the purpose of the appointment should be clearly identified in advance so that appropriate arrangements for recording the conversation can be made

Initial considerations and actions

12.10. Full details of the allegation will be established and recorded

12.11. An initial assessment to establish whether any immediate action is required to ensure the safety of everyone involved will be conducted and enacted

12.12. The DSL in consultation with the Chair of Trustees will identify an initial plan of action

12.12.1. Dependent upon circumstances and the immediate action required, notifying the individual that an allegation has been received may be unavoidable
12.12.2. If so, care should be taken not to compromise the gathering of evidence.
12.12.3. If it is necessary to notify the individual at this stage, details of the allegation should not be divulged
12.12.4. Support must be offered to the subject of the allegation as well as any potential victims

Allegations that meet a threshold for statutory reporting

12.13. The DSL will, at the earliest opportunity, consult with / refer to relevant statutory agencies
12.14. The DSL will work with, and under the guidance of the statutory agencies to ensure that the allegation is thoroughly investigated, and all issues raised are addressed. Support can be requested from CSS at any time

Allegations that do not meet the thresholds for statutory reporting

12.15. The DSL will, in consultation with the Executive Director or the Chair of Trustees, identify and appoint an investigation team consisting of:
12.15.1. An overseeing officer (who must be a Trustee or, in exceptional circumstances, an external specialist) to provide scrutiny and accountability
12.15.2. An investigating officer who will lead the investigation
12.15.3. If additional resource is required / desirable, the investigation team can be expanded and will be led by the investigating officer
12.16. The investigating officer may consult with CSS, who will provide independent support and advice to ensure transparency
12.17. The investigating officer will acknowledge receipt of the allegation and will notify those making the allegation and the accused of the process that will be followed and of anticipated timeframes
12.18. A detailed investigation plan will be developed by the investigating officer and signed off the overseeing officer
12.19. The investigation will be conducted
12.19.1. The investigating officer and overseeing officer can contact CSS at any stage to seek advice
12.20. Thorough records of all aspects of the handling of the allegation will be retained throughout the process.
12.20.1. These records will be held and stored confidentially and securely by the investigating officer until the investigation is complete. Once complete, all records will be stored securely and confidentially stored in the office in a locked cabinet
12.21. Once the investigation is complete, the final investigation report will be passed to the overseeing officer for sign off
12.21.1. The report will conclude using the same outcome findings as the statutory processes; those being substantiated, unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, and malicious
12.21.2. Details of the investigation outcome will be retained in the persons confidential unless the outcome is “malicious”
12.21.3. Documentation relating to the investigation process and outcomes will be held securely by the DSL. for the purpose of regulatory accountability
12.22. The Investigation outcomes will be reported to the Executive Director and the Chair of Trustees,
12.23. The accused and those making the allegation will be informed of the outcome
12.24. If the allegation is upheld, corrective or disciplinary measured will be enacted according to the appropriate policies and contractual requirements
12.25. There is no appeal stage in relation to an allegation against a member of staff, volunteer, or other individual acting on behalf of LCF
12.25.1. If the person making the allegation believes that the outcome is incorrect, they can raise their concerns using the complaints process
12.25.2. The complainant must outline clearly the basis of the complaint and the justification for complaining about the process and / or outcome.

12.26. The process will be reviewed to identify lessons that can be learned

13. Complaints about LCF processes or actions

Anonymous complaints

13.1. Complaints that are made anonymously cannot be handled in the usual way and will generally be filed without full investigation.

13.2. Complaints that request a level of confidentiality that would compromise the integrity of an investigation, or its outcome will not be investigated, but may be considered in general terms. They will generally be filed without full investigation

13.3. LCF will not respond to complaints made in public space such as social media or other online or in-print publications. All complaints should be addressed to LCF directly using this complaints process

13.4. Although anonymous complaints cannot, by definition, be handled in the usual way, LCF will

13.4.1. Log the complaints

13.4.2. Seek to establish whether any pattern or consistency can be identified

13.4.3. Consider whether any form of investigation or action can and should be taken

External investigations

13.5. Concerns, complaints, and allegations will generally be investigated internally

13.6. In exceptional circumstances such as where LCF have concerns about the independence or competence of staff, or their capacity to conduct a timely investigation, LCF will consider whether it is appropriate to involve an independent external individual or organisation to assist with the investigation

13.7. Unless directed by a statutory or regulatory body to involve an independent, external body, LCF will make such decisions. Advice can be sought from CSS or other sources, but this decision rests solely in the hands of LCF trustees and senior leaders

Making a complaint

13.8. Complaints about LCF's processes or actions should be addressed in accordance with the LCF's Complaints Procedure

13.9. Consideration will be given to whether a Serious Incident Report needs to be made to the Charity Commission

13.10. The DSL will, in consultation with the Executive Director and / or the Chair of Trustees, identify and appoint an investigation team consisting of:

13.10.1. An overseeing officer (who must be a Trustee or, in exceptional circumstances, an external specialist) to provide scrutiny and accountability

13.10.2. An investigating officer who will lead the investigation

13.10.3. If additional resource is required / desirable, the investigation team can be expanded and will be led by the investigating officer

Preliminary actions

13.11. The investigating officer may consult with CSS, who will provide independent support and advice to ensure transparency

13.12. The investigating officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and will notify the complainants of the initial plan of action which will include:

13.12.1. Discussing the complaint with the complainants to confirm and clarify the details of the complaint

13.12.2. Details of the complaint process and of key contacts will be provided to the complainants.

13.12.3. The investigating Officer will establish whether the complainants wish to start the process at stage 1 (informal resolution) or stage 2 (formal complaint)

13.12.4. A detailed investigation plan will be developed by the investigating officer and signed off the overseeing officer

Stage 1 – Informal resolution

Where possible, LCF prefers to commence at this stage; believing this to be best aligned to the biblical principles, however, this will be a decision for the complainants, and if they request commencement at stage 2, that decision will be fully respected by LCF.

13.13. The investigating officer, supported by a relevant member of staff if required will arrange to discuss the matter with the complainants

13.13.1. Relevant in this context would include someone with in-depth knowledge of the area of ministry being investigated, a notetaker, a nominated trustee etc

13.14. The aim at this stage is to establish whether agreement can be reached about action that is required

13.15. LCF will make a written record of the discussion that includes:

13.15.1. The key points discussed, and views expressed

13.15.2. Areas of agreement

13.15.3. Areas of disagreement

13.15.4. Conclusions and actions agreed

13.16. The written record of the meeting will be provided to the complainants who will have opportunity to request amendments or clarification

13.17. Once agreed, the complainants will be asked to confirm the accuracy of the notes of the discussion

If resolution has been agreed

13.18. Once LCF have completed the agreed actions, they will notify the complainants of the action taken

13.19. The complainants will be asked to confirm that they are happy that the matter has been addressed

13.20. The complaints log will be updated, and the notes will be stored securely by the DSL

If resolution has not been agreed

13.21. A record of the closing position of the informal stage will be agreed between the complainant and the investigating officer. This will include any progress made and actions agreed / completed and the issues that could not be resolved

13.22. The closing report will be signed off by the overseeing officer who will escalate the matter to the formal stage

Stage 2 – formal investigation

13.23. Complaints at the formal stage will be reviewed by the Executive Director and the Chair of Trustees to ascertain whether there are sufficient grounds for a full investigation

13.23.1. If a full investigation is required / justified, this will be agreed and authorised at the appropriate level

13.24. The overseeing officer and Investigating officer for this stage will be agreed

13.25. A detailed investigation plan will be developed by the investigation team and will then be communicated to the complainants

13.26. The matter will be thoroughly investigated, and a final (Stage 2) report will be delivered to the overseeing officer for sign off

13.27. Once signed off, the outcome will be communicated to the complainants, the Vice Chair and the Chair of trustees. The complainants will be notified of their right of appeal and of the process and timescales for doing so

13.28. All records will be stored confidentially by the DSL

Stage 3 - Appeal

13.29. If the complainants believe that the process or findings if the formal investigation is incorrect, they can raise their concerns using the appeal process

13.29.1. The complainant must outline clearly the basis of the appeal and the justification for appealing the process and / or outcome.

13.29.2. The trustees (or a nominated subgroup thereof will consider the grounds of appeal and decide whether the appeal is justified

13.29.3. The appeal will be conducted by suitably skilled individuals who were not part of the stage 2 process and who are not involved in the complaint

13.30. An appeal report will be produced and submitted to the trustees (or the subgroup thereof) for final signoff

13.31. The complainants will be notified of the outcome of the appeal and their options of further action (e.g. referral to the Charity regulator, the police, or the Local Authority etc will be provided.

The process will be reviewed to identify lessons that can be learned

14. Concerns about practice and whistleblowing

The LCF has a Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure in place. The LCF wishes to create an open and transparent environment where staff, volunteers or others who act on our behalf can raise concerns about practice or any other matter. Any concerns about the culture or practice within LCF should be raised with the individual's line manager. If for some reason they do not feel able to do so, or if they feel that their concerns are not being taken seriously, the concern should be raised with the Executive Director or the Chair of Trustees

Basis of policy and legal framework

This policy is consistent with:

- Current legislation
- National guidance
- Local arrangements
- Our charitable objectives, governing documents and doctrinal statements

Full details are available in appendix B

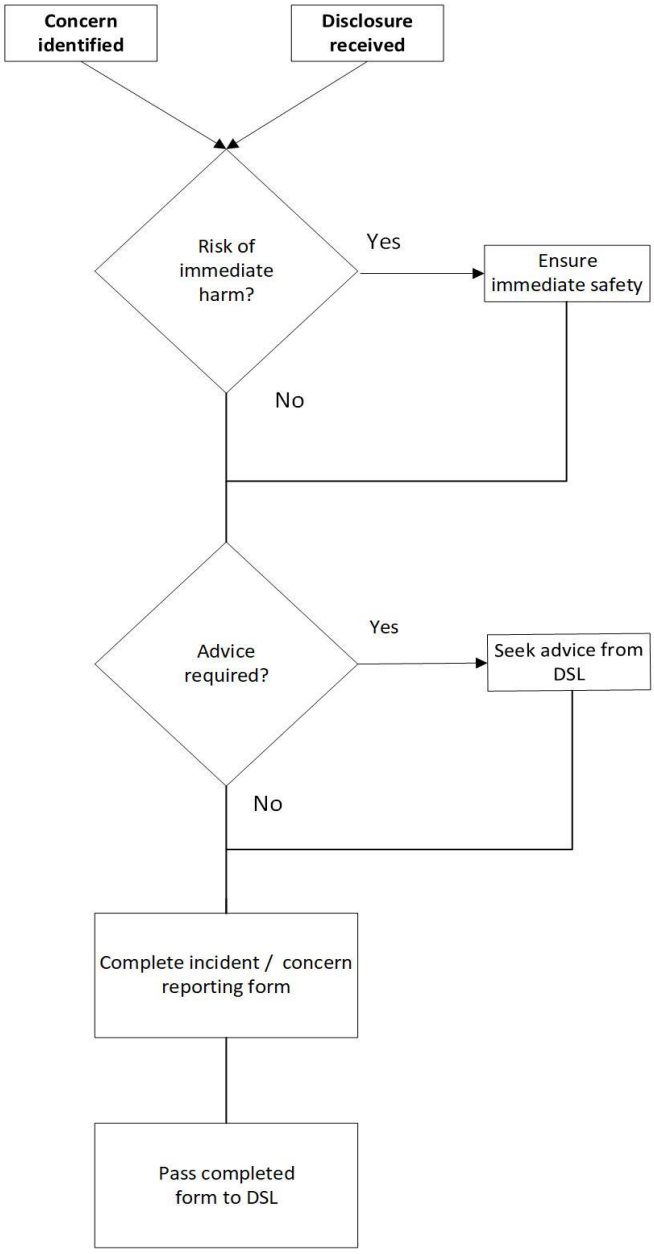
Related policies and procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the LCF:

- Doctrinal Basis
- Recruitment Policy and Procedure
- Equality Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Complaints Procedure

Policy due for review:	Policy last reviewed:	Last review conducted / approved by:
June 2023	27.06.2022	Approved by trustees on 27.06.2022

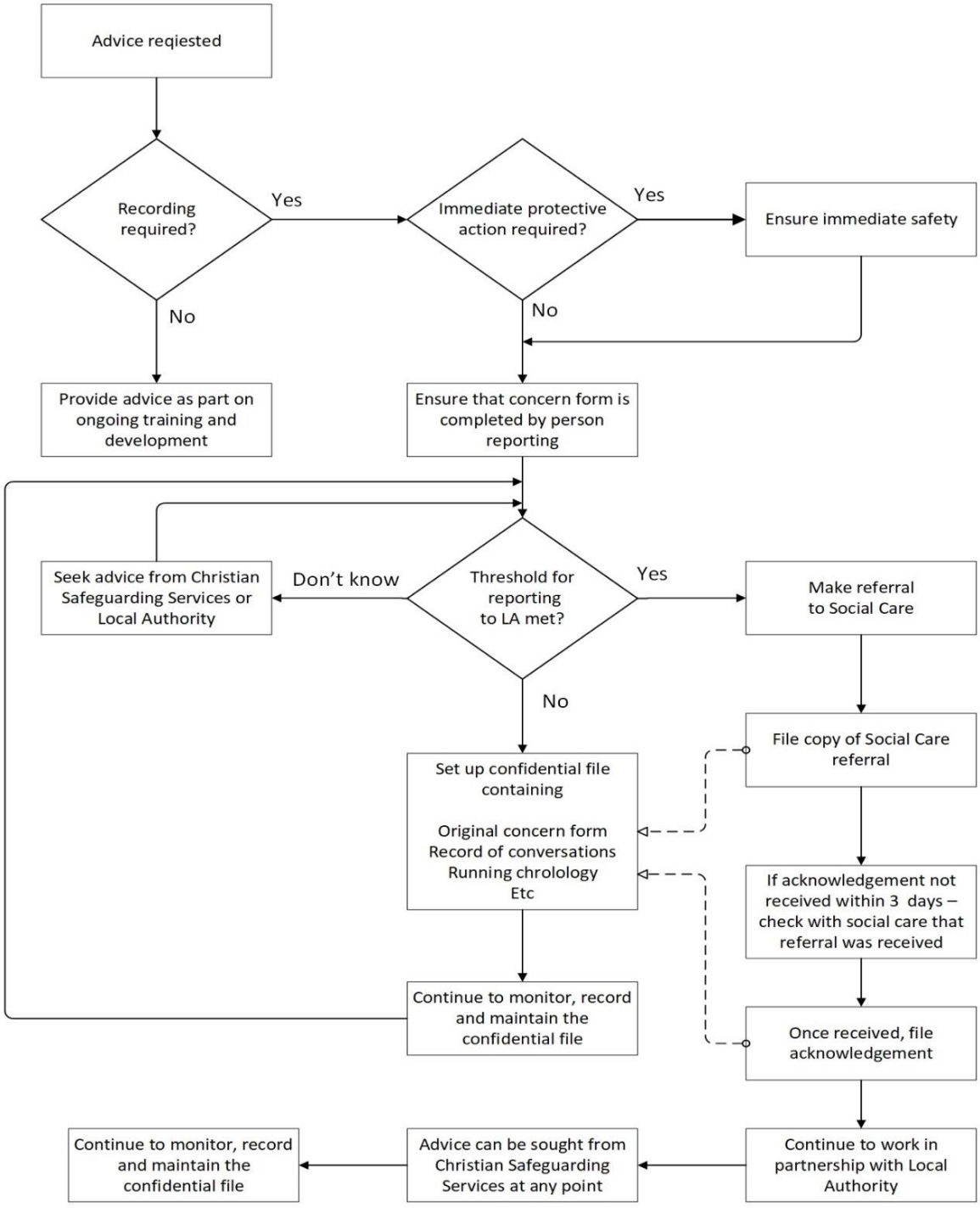
Reporting concerns or disclosures



Christian Safeguarding Services can be contacted for advice at any point in the process

0116 218 4420 or contact@thecss.co.uk

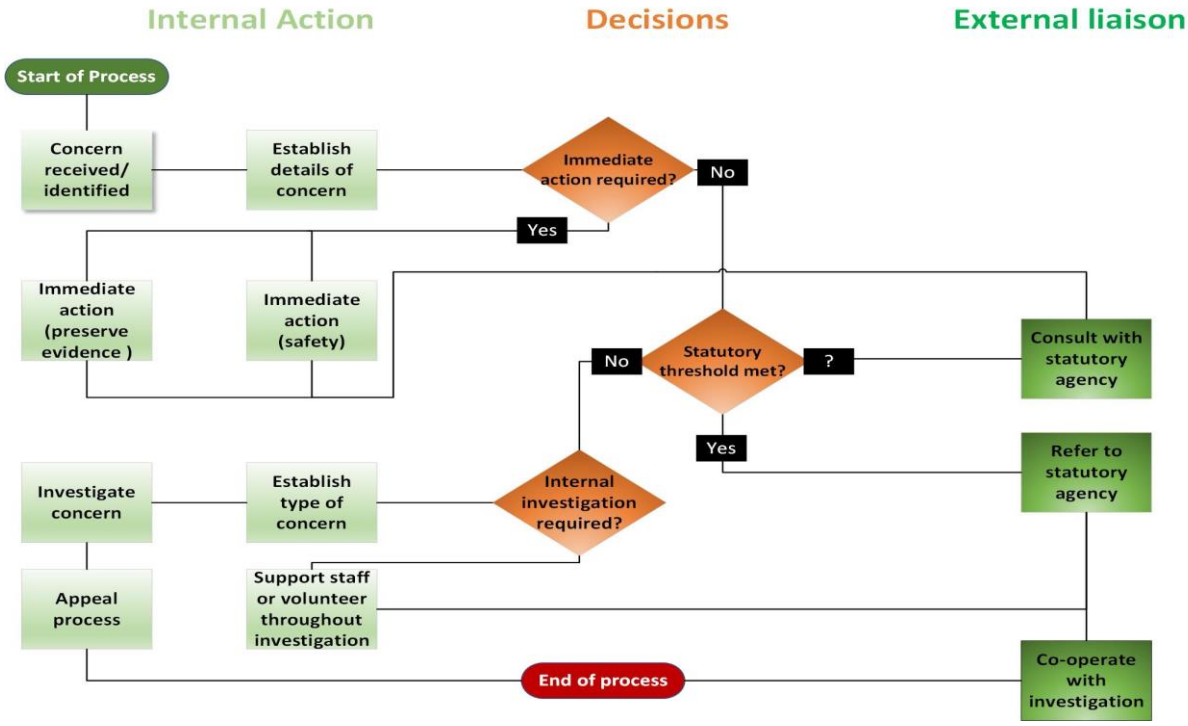
Processing concerns or disclosures: the role of the DSL



Christian Safeguarding Services can be contacted for advice at any point in the process

0116 218 4420 or contact@thecss.co.uk

Initial decisions



Process of investigation (internal)

