FOCUS

CHALLENGE PROGRAMME

TEAM ADVISOR PACK

FOCUS

Inspiring People, Changing Communities

CHALLENGE TEAM ADVISOR MANUAL

Contents

Appendices

Challenge Programme Timetable

Monday
Session One: Opening presentation, team-building exercise, form filling, what is community discussion, community project brief handed out
Start Time: 9:15am
End Time: 12:00pm

Session Two: Team Roles assigned and relevant *guidelines* handed out, contact community group, Project planning
Start Time: 1:00pm
End Time: 3:00pm

End of day debrief with TA's

Tuesday
Session Three: Project starts
Start Time: 9:15am
End Time: 12:05pm

Session Four: Project continues
Start Time: 1:00pm
End Time: 3:00pm

End of day debrief with TA's

Wednesday
Session Five: Project continues
Start Time: 9:15am
End Time: 12:00pm

Session Sixth: Finish Project
Start Time: 1:00pm
End Time: 3:00pm

End of day debrief with TA's

Thursday
Session Seven:. Evaluation, Presentation planning
Start Time: 9:15am
End Time: 12:00pm

Session Eight: Final presentations and certificates
Start Time: 1:00pm
End Time: 3.00pm

End of project debrief where TA's hand in evaluation forms

1. Background

FOCUS was founded in 1988 as a 'grassroots' organisation aiming to provide opportunities for young people at risk of social exclusion or disaffection and people with a disability to take part in inspiring team-based projects through which they can learn and grow together.

The Challenge Programme was established in 1993 with the aim of providing young people at school with an opportunity to work in a team in order to deliver a project that would benefit their local community. It operates within the national curriculum in, for example, Citizenship, PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education), Work-Related Learning, Enterprise Education or the ASDAN Youth Award. In addition to the benefit to the community, the young people engage in a fun and inspiring project, develop their team-working skills and their knowledge of their own attributes and abilities. Furthermore, the programme can develop improved relations between schools and their local community.

In 2004 FOCUS undertook a comprehensive review of all of its services and programmes and the Challenge Programme was redesigned in the light of this review and in pursuit of our vision of creating:

"A society in which people feel inspired and empowered to have a positive impact in their communities"

What are we aiming to achieve?

Our main aims as an organisation, are to enable and support the personal learning and development of all individuals involved in our programmes, and encourage the practice and development of personal skills. We aim to:

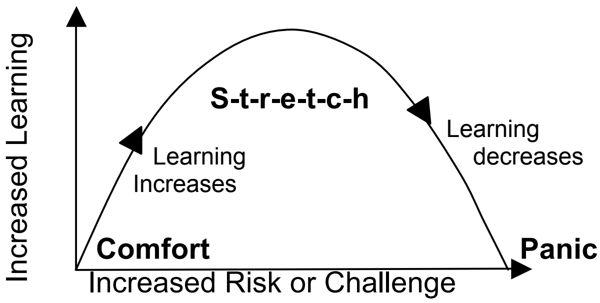
- *To provide opportunities for growth, learning and development that are fun and inspiring*
- *To support the development of self-awareness, self-confidence, self-belief and self-esteem for all of our programme participants, volunteers and staff*
- *To enable individuals to develop skills that are relevant to them such as communication, negotiation, task-management, problem-solving and team-working*
- *To facilitate improved relationships between individuals and groups*
- *To foster a positive appreciation of the uniqueness of individuals, their beliefs, backgrounds, abilities and experiences*
- *To develop an improved understanding of communities, their value and individuals' importance to them*

In the broader context of many of the issues currently facing society, FOCUS programmes often have a significant contribution to make in the following areas:

- *Tackling social exclusion and disaffection*
- *Raising the educational achievements of those taking part*
- *Improving employability and life long learning*
- *Developing citizenship and community involvement*

Why do we believe this is important?
Many people have a set of limiting beliefs about themselves and their capabilities, by challenging these perceptions in a caring and appropriate way; we aim to encourage people to see new possibilities for themselves.

When does learning take place?



FOCUS programmes try to create an environment of challenge and appropriate stretch where individuals can learn most, by bringing different people together to take part in unusual and challenging activities.

By building close-knit teams where trust and support are developed, we are able to carefully manage the situations that arise in order to avoid taking too great a risk and perhaps falling into the panic zone.

Every individual will find different experiences stretching or challenging. For some these might be practical or physical activities. For others these might be aspects of working and dealing with other people.

2. Team Advisor Role Description

Purpose: To provide support and facilitation to a group of young people as they plan and deliver a project for the benefit of their local community.

Accountable to: FOCUS Project Manager

Key Responsibilities

- To attend FOCUS' Challenge Programme Team Advisor training course
- To work in line with, and uphold, FOCUS' Health & Safety and Child Protection policies, and to follow FOCUS' working practices as described during the training and throughout the programme by the Project Manager
- To uphold the organisations rules
- To attend all Challenge Programme sessions for the duration of the project
- To attend pre-session briefings and post-session debriefings and to inform the Project Manager and school staff of team progress
- To facilitate the delivery of a community project by a team of young people and to actively encourage them to reflect on their learning
- To provide coaching as appropriate to pupils in their team roles
- To support the team in collecting evidence of their project and learning outcomes
- To ensure the safety and welfare of the pupils during off-site visits by acting as a 'Responsible Adult'
- To write a brief evaluation report of the team's project
- To carry out other reasonable duties as required by the Project Manager

3. Classroom Tips

General Tips for Team Advisors

- Keep it enjoyable- but controlled
- Preparation is everything
- Set the ground rules- the relationship should be based on shared respect- be honest, positive and open
- Set a good example

Making your Contribution Count

The most difficult issue for many Team Advisors in working with their team is finding an appropriate way of contributing to the project without becoming the team's unofficial leader. You may find it helpful to use the following types of intervention:

Acceptant – by this we mean that you allow the team, or an individual, to make their point or present their ideas by indicating that you are listening and that you approve of their contribution. This can be done by nodding and making approving noises such as: "Yes", "Uh-huh", "OK", "Sounds good", etc.

Catalytic – this is the method by which you can influence the team, or an individual, to consider further an aspect of their contribution through comments such as: "Can you explain that further?", "Tell me more about …", "That sounds interesting, what do you mean by…?", etc.

Confrontational – by this we mean that you can challenge the team, or an individual, to justify their assumption, decision or idea. This should not be done in an aggressive or negative way, but should enable them to consider their point of view in greater depth. The following phrases can achieve this: "How did you come to that conclusion?", "Are you certain that you have made the right decision?", or "Is this going to achieve the results you want?"

These three interventions should enable you to encourage the team to make their own decisions and to carry out their roles more effectively. You may on occasion choose to use two other types of intervention, although you should consider carefully whether you are acting in the team's best interests. These are:

Prescriptive – if the three main interventions do not generate the desired result, and if you fear that the project may be in jeopardy otherwise, you may wish to offer the team your considered opinion of the best way forward. That is, tell them what you think they should do.

Theoretical – it may at times be useful to take time to explain to the team the theory behind an idea. For example, you could share with them your knowledge of group development theory to help them to understand why they are struggling to make progress; or you may wish to ask them to stop and consider the experiential learning cycle before repeating a mistake they have made before

Managing Discussions

When facilitating a discussion with your team you should be aware of a number of key issues:

Involving everyone – be aware of how much 'air time' each person is taking up and regularly look around the team members to monitor whether any individuals appear to be wanting to speak, but are not doing so. Allow them to know that you have noticed them by making eye contact and, when an opportunity arises, ask them if they have a comment or contribution to make.

Encouraging the silent types to talk will help ensure a much more inclusive solution and speed up the implementation. Also it will set a model for equal participation from everyone.

Here are some suggestions for dealing with participants who don't participate:

- Reduce the anxiety level by using an alternative format. For example, break the large group into pairs for preliminary sharing of ideas. Then ask each pair to give a summary report of their discussion.
- Ask the participants to write their concerns, comments, suggestions, or whatever on index cards. Then ask the team to cluster these cards and organise them into themes.
- Direct questions to the silent participant. Ask questions related to the silent participant's areas of expertise and interest.
- Ask the silent participant to react to someone else's statement.
- Ask everyone to take turns to make a 1-minute presentation.
- Reinforce comments from the quiet participant (without appearing to be patronizing).
- Before the meeting or during a break, talk to the silent participant. Emphasize the importance of her or his participation and collaboratively work out strategies to increasing the level of participation.
- Before the meeting or during a break, assign the role of identifying and drawing out the reluctant participant to a one or two team members
- Call on the silent participant by name. Frequently use the name of this participant.

Silence Buster

Have you ever asked a question during your training session only to be confronted with silence so deafening that you can hear a pin drop? Would you like to learn a way to change the atmosphere of your class from dead silence to total participation? If so, here's a valuable tip from our reader Michelle Tomczyk (who is the Director of Curriculum Design at EBS Sales Training Division in Parsippany, NJ).

If there is no response to your question, simply say, "Turn to the person next to you and discuss this." You will magically transform your room from absolute quiet to lively discussion in 5 seconds or less. What's nice about this method is that there isn't any need for props or preparation. You can use it in any class, with any topic. Participants usually think you planned the group discussion and don't have a clue that it was a spontaneous decision to promote interaction.

Appreciating contributions – always try to thank each individual for their contribution. A team in which people feel able to state the obvious, make a potentially controversial suggestion, or give the ‘wrong’ answer will be more likely to be creative in their approach to problem solving.

Staying on track – if a discussion drifts away from the issue at hand you should bring the group back to their subject as quickly as possible, but without cutting someone off or dismissing their contribution. Try to do this in a positive way by thanking an individual for their comments and then picking up a relevant point that was made earlier. Also, there may be times when other people, such as teachers or the Project Manager, are present and wish to observe the team working together. Try to help the team to continue without becoming distracted. You can do this by acknowledging the presence of the observer and then bringing the team’s focus back to the discussion.

Reaching consensus – it is important that any discussion results in an agreement and an action plan for implementing it. You can help this by agreeing with the team how they will reach consensus. Ask them to consider whether they need a unanimous decision or whether a majority will suffice. If the latter option is taken, how big a majority will be needed? And also, at what point will they decide that they have discussed all the issues and made all their points? In the case of majority decisions, you may wish to spend time with those who were overruled to discuss how they will get behind the decision. Without their support the project may be hampered. Encourage the Team Secretary to make a note of any decisions that are made to avoid repeating discussions needlessly.

‘**Less is More’** – if the team is making good progress in their discussion simply allow this to continue. Remember, the idea is that they will manage their own project and it is desirable if you can hand ‘ownership’ of a discussion to them whilst you observe. This will make it much easier for you to take a ‘helicopter view’, in which you are able to observe the whole team without the distraction of being deeply involved. I am not sure who presents a tougher challenge to the Team Advisor: the participant who talks too much or the one who talks too little. It is easier to ignore the silent ones than the excessive talkers. Remember, however, that you pay now or pay later. Silence does not always mean consent. It may mean that the uncommunicative participant slowly building to a ‘negative contribution’.

4. Team Advisor Checklist

This checklist is intended for Team Advisors to ensure that they are completing any necessary paperwork on time and that their team remains on track to complete their project.

This checklist is intended for a four-day Challenge Programme event

Monday

- [ ] Young people *Starting Point Questionnaires* completed
- [ ] Young people *Monitoring Forms* completed
- [ ] Discussion: "What is your community?" taken place
- [ ] *Community Project Brief* handed out
- [ ] Team Role Descriptions handed out and discussed
- [ ] Team Roles assigned and relevant *guidelines* handed out
- [ ] Contact made with community group and meeting arranged
- [ ] Project action plan completed
- [ ] *Session Record Worksheet* completed by Team Secretary
- [ ] *Session Evaluation Form* completed by Team Advisor

Tuesday

- [ ] Project started
- [ ] Review of progress to date
- [ ] Project approaching completion
- [ ] Project progress discussed with community group
- [ ] *Session Record Worksheet* completed by Team Secretary
- [ ] *Session Evaluation Form* completed by Team Advisor

Wednesday

- [ ] Project completed and final meeting with community group taken place
- [ ] *Student Evaluation Sheets* completed
- [ ] *Session Record Worksheet* completed by Team Secretary

Thursday

- Review of whole project ☐
- Ensure all evidence is handed over to the team ☐
- Presentation preparations completed ☐
- *Session Record Worksheet* completed by Team Secretary ☐
- *End point questionnaires* completed by young people ☐
- *Session Evaluation Form* completed by Team Advisor ☐
- *Team Advisor Evaluation Form* completed ☐

5. Getting To Know Your Team

Use ice-breakers to help brake down any existing barriers, remember to value the pupils as individuals- be open about yourself to encourage them to do the same

The purposes of icebreakers may include any combination of:

1. helping to set a positive atmosphere for member interaction;
2. encouraging interest in the overall training experience;
3. building trainer credibility;
4. providing a feel for the group and assessing participants' attitudes, knowledge and experience with the topic;
5. building cohesiveness and trust among participants and between the trainer and participants;
6. severing the audience's preoccupation with work or personal issues;
7. diminishing the fear of the learning process;
8. aiding participants to become acquainted with each other in order to develop a spirit of cooperation and interdependence.

Toilet Paper Game
Everyone sits in a circle, pass round a roll of toilet paper tell people to take as much as they think they will need.
Once this is complete, the first person then tells everyone something about them for each sheet of paper. i.e. Tome took 3 sheets so he says
"I'm from Leicester"
"I like football"
"My favourite colour is blue"

A variation is that you go round the circle each person taking a turn and putting a sheet of toilet paper in the middle when they have been. Once they have run out of paper they stop but everyone else keeps going.

Equipment
Toilet Roll

Three Truths and a Lie
One of my personal favourites, this icebreaker has participants give four pieces of information about themselves, making certain that three are truthful and one is a lie. The group tries to guess which one is the lie. This can be especially fun in a group that has begun to become acquainted but may not know each other well, such as the staff of an organization or a group of volunteers. This exercise is not threatening as each participant chooses what he/she wishes to share.

- It is best to start with a person whom you know will be at ease and will perhaps
  initiate some humour to this form of icebreaker.
- This is also a great icebreaker for the trainer to personally share his/her information.
- If the group is large, the activity may be carried out in smaller groups. If it is important that the participants work as a team during the training, then it is best for all to participate in the icebreaker together.
- As it is a relatively long exercise, this may not be the correct choice for a relatively short training session

A variation on this theme is to have people introduce themselves with their name and other information that may be useful to you as trainer and/or for the interaction with the other participants

A Variety of Brief Openers

Most if not all training sessions should commence with the opportunity for participants to introduce themselves by sharing their names and a limited amount of personal information about themselves. When time allows, participants can be encouraged to offer additional information in an icebreaking format. For example:

- The participant uses an adjective that describes him/herself, one that starts with the same letter as his/her first name.
- Each participant offers his/her "stage name" which might be made up of a combination of a name of one of his/her pets and a street they have lived on. (Mine is "Blackjack Taylor") Not only does this warm up the session initially, but participants also find it fun to continue to use these names throughout the session.
- The participants decorate their nametags to best depict their personalities. During introductions, they are given the opportunity to explain their choice of decoration.
- Each individual is asked to find a coin that they have brought with them. They are told to look at the date and to share something that they did in that year that was significant, memorable, related to volunteering, etc. Endless variations are possible.

6. Review and Feedback

Running a Review Session

The Review Process – any review should follow a simple process that asks:
WHAT happened: The team should reflect on the events that have taken place
SO WHAT: What are the effects on the individuals and on the project of the events that have taken place and what has been learned?
NOW WHAT: bearing in mind what has been learned, what will the team do next?

Time and Place – Reviews should take place at regular intervals in order to embed learning opportunities, to ensure that the project is progressing as planned, and to monitor the emotions and level of satisfaction of team members. It is important to ensure that the team members feel comfortable and able to contribute to a review. You should therefore consider carefully how, where and when you run a review session. In doing so, ask yourself the following questions:

Remember that reviews can take place BEFORE, DURING or AFTER an activity. And reviews can be FORMAL or INFORMAL.

Review Methods - There are various ways of reviewing, although to start with it is best to stick with one or two methods.

Line outs

The team are told that one end of the room means that they agree with the statement completely and the other end of the room means they completely disagrees with the statement. The distance in between is used if they slightly agree or agree mostly. You may begin by asking, who enjoyed the last activity, people then find a position in the room, which shows how much they enjoyed the lasted activity. You may wish to question someone about the position they have adopted. Why did they like or dislike it. What they would of preferred.
You then ask another question such as how much have people learnt this week. It is useful to explain what the walls mean in each case.

Variations

You can use anything as the two scales, how close you are to a tree, how high you can stretch. How close you can get to the team advisor.

Another useful one is having everyone sitting down and closing their eyes and raising or lowering their hand by varying amounts to show how much they agree. You may or may not want to get them to open their eyes after every question. It is a useful way of getting feedback from the team without the effects of peer pressure.

Review sheets

These come in a selection of themes, such as smiley faces or the Jelly Baby tree. Give them out, asking the young person to colour in the ones appropriate to the way they are feeling, then either individually or as a group ask them to discuss there options

Marks out of ten

Ask each team member to rate the group out of ten for team-working, listening, helping etc.

What do they need to do to make it 10?

Acknowledge their score e.g. 8/10 " that's pretty high, what did you do to get 80%?"

Take forward what went well, as well as areas to work on.

Snap Shots

Ask half the group to create a snap shot of when the team were working well together? Ask the other half to create a snap shot of when it was not working well?

Give a few minutes to prepare (give time checks "one minute left", "thirty seconds to go")

Ask one group first "5,4,3, 2, 1- freeze" the group should freeze, and then ask the other group to say what they can see?

Check if this was what was being represented. Swap over, and then make a list of things to do more or less of.

To extend this review, put your hand on some-ones shoulder and ask, "what is this person thinking or feeling"

Predictions

After giving the group their task, ask the team:

What they think will happen?

Will they enjoy it?

Will they complete the task?

Will they listen to each other?

What would you like to happen?

Come back to these predictions at the end of the activity and compare them with what actually happened.

Metaphors

Cars, animals, Star Trek characters, colour, weather symbols, etc.

Pick a metaphor e.g. a car. Show the team where the different parts of the car would go and ask them to put themselves into the position that represents the part they played in the activity e.g. Driver, steering, the brakes, the tyre etc.

Capturing Comments - You need to keep notes on each individual and plan time to fill in each session evaluation form, and to help you write the certificates at the end of the programme.

The pupils also have evaluation sheets to fill in, which should give you an idea of how they felt about the day.

Running a Feedback Session

A feedback session should provide an opportunity for individual team members to receive comments on their performance from their team-mates. These are notoriously difficult to manage and you should only undertake them if you feel confident that you can carefully manage the team, ensuring that any feedback is given and received in a forum that is friendly and supportive and provides an opportunity to deal with the emotional impact it can have.

Encourage young people to comment on each other, though this must be carefully controlled.
Finish each session by reflecting on the achievements/ issues of the day. Avoid a blaming culture by talking through why it might of happened.
Here are some methods for Feedback:

Beanbags
The team stands or sits in a circle and are given one beanbag each. For very small teams two can be used. The team advisor then makes a statement such as "Someone who made an effort today."

The team members then throw the beanbag to the feet of the person they think it most applies to. The beanbags are then redistributed out again and the Team Advisor makes other statement. Other people can make statements if they like.

If the Team Advisor cannot think of appropriate statement it is worth looking at the computer cards before hand to get some ideas.

Computer Cards
The computer cards are placed in the middle of the circle, each team member takes a turn at taking one, reading it out aloud and then giving it to someone whom it applies.
So if Bob picks up the card, which reads "Some one who was helpful today", he may give it to Mary for helping buy the shopping used in the evening entertainment.

Silent circle
The group stand or sit in a circle with the team advisor not taking part. A person is selected from the team; the rest of the team must then shut their eyes. The selected individual then walks round the outside of the circle.
The Team Advisor then makes statements such as "Someone I would like to thank for helping me today"
The individual walking round then touches the person or people that the statement applies to. The statements should always be positive and allow someone to touch at least one person each time. Once they have had their turn (3 questions or so) another person takes over and the process is repeated.

7. Choosing Roles

You will need to run a group activity with the young people, which gets them to think about the different styles of leadership. On the following page there is a handout for your references on the different leadership styles. You could work with the group to rename these leadership styles to make them more young people friendly and easy to remember.

Next you will need the group to think about what qualities make a good leader. Once the group has established these the group should be ready to allocate roles within there own team based on different team members strengths.

You may want to set a very simple task and use the results from this to choose a leader, or you may decide to vote on it. This should depend on the group dynamics.

You need to appoint a:

- Team leader
- Assistant Team Leader
- Finance manager
- Resources manager
- Team secretary
- Publicity officer

Every member of the team should receive a copy of the team member role description, as they will all have to undertake this role.

All copies of role descriptions and worksheets can be found in section 5 of the Appendixes.

8 Setting Goals & Action Planning

Setting Goals

Once you have built a team and got to know individuals you need to encourage the young people to set goals by reflecting on what has been done and thinking ahead. Keep a record of what each young person plans and help them develop realistic ideas and reflect on these as they are implemented.

Action Planning

The team have a sheet to fill in to help them plan. They may need your help in this to produce a realistic time scale and give everyone a big enough challenge.

Remember:

WHAT: What needs to be done. This list may need to be put in order of essentials and extras.

WHO: Who will do each job? You need to involve the whole team.

WHEN: When will things be completed and what needs to be done first.
Think through the plan yourself and anticipate problems and safety issues, then discuss these with the team. You may decide there is not enough to do – so add some fundraising, wall display, video making or make gifts for the community group.

Get your team to take responsibility to refer to the plan and keep to it.

Project Plan

NOTE: A copy of this plan must be given to the Project Manger by the Team Advisor at the debrief at the end of Tuesdays session

<u>**What do we need**</u>? Create a shopping list of all the equipment you will need to complete your project. Try and be as specific as possible.

<u>**What will we do?**</u> Create and action plan of what you will do when so that you can ensure the project will be completed in the allocated time.

<u>**Who will do what?**</u> Allocate specific roles and responsibility's to individuals everyone should have a specific role and the workload should be spread out equally amongst the team.

9. Planning your Final Presentation

To show everyone what you have achieved you need to put on a presentation. Here are some points to consider:

- Who is the audience? How many are there? Is it your class, year group, school? Will there be any visitors?
- Content – think about what information you want to include eg. details about your project, how you organised yourselves, who your community group was and what you learnt as a team and individuals.
- Style of presentation – could you present it in an imaginative way, eg as a radio or TV report? Could your display board include photographs, pictures, letters, action plans, questionnaires, reports, posters?
- Where are you giving your presentation? – think about the space you have and how the chairs will be arranged.
- What equipment do you need? – eg flip chart, video, posters, board pens, costumes.
- The other teams don't know what you did - think how you can give a flavour of what your project, community group and your team were like.
- This is a team challenge and everyone must be involved.

<u>Tips</u>

- Know who is doing what and when
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Make sure your audience can hear you
- Enjoy it!

10. FOCUS' Policy and Procedures

During your training you will have been given an abridged version of FOCUS' Health & Safety, complaints procedure and Safeguarding policy. The following full policies are extracted directly from the FOCUS Safety Statement, a full copy of which is available for viewing at the FOCUS office:

Health and Safety Policy

INTRODUCTION

FOCUS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all its staff, volunteers and participants within premises occupied by FOCUS and in surrounding areas while undertaking activities organised by FOCUS. FOCUS takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that it operates all its projects and activities in full accordance with the relevant health and safety legislation, regulations and official guidance and will do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all those involved in its projects and activities.

Based on the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, FOCUS is committed to:

- Providing safe and healthy working conditions within all of its programmes and projects taking into account any statutory requirements.
- Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all participants whilst in the organisation's care.
- Providing training and instruction to enable employees and volunteers to perform their work safely and efficiently.
- Making available all necessary safety devices and protective equipment, and supervising their use.
- Making use of other professional organisations and their advice when necessary.
- Maintaining a constant and continuing interest in Health and Safety matters applicable to the organisation's activities, in particular by consulting and involving employees, volunteers and participants wherever possible.

Employees and volunteers have a duty to co-operate in the operation of this policy:

- By working safely and efficiently.
- By using any protective equipment provided, and by meeting statutory obligations.
- By reporting all incidents and accidents that have led, or may lead to injury or damage.
- By adhering to the organisation's procedures developed on their behalf for securing a safe workplace/environment.
- By assisting in the investigation of accidents with the objective of introducing measures to prevent a recurrence.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The general responsibilities for Health and Safety measures at FOCUS are as follows:

Trustees have ultimate responsibility for the Health and Safety of all employees and volunteers.

Director has overall responsibility to ensure that Health and Safety Policies and Practices are devised, implemented and reviewed regularly. The Director and Trustees will conduct an annual review to ensure that the Safety Statement remains effective and complies with any new legislation.

Safety Coordinator (currently Matt Lilley) responsibilities include:

- Briefing all new members of staff on safety and ensuring that they sign a Staff Safety Form during their induction.
- Advising the Director and Trustees on all matters relating to Health and Safety to ensure the organisation meets its obligations under the Health and Safety Act and any other associated regulations or statutory requirements.
- Updating FOCUS' Safety Statement annually.
- Maintaining the accident report system, investigating accidents and recommending actions to remove the cause and recurrence of the accident, and compiling accident reports quarterly for presentation at the trustees' meeting
- Conducting inspections biannually with other staff to check that staff and volunteers are fully aware of and complying with the Safety Statement. The results of the inspection and recommendations for immediate action will be reported directly to the Project Leader (if on project) and the Director
- Providing the Director with annual reports on the status of Health and Safety within the organisation, and in particular issuing a yearly report to the Director, which includes training records, sickness, accidents, safety audits, results of inspections and new legislation

All staff are responsible for the integration and implementation of this policy throughout their areas of jurisdiction, and must:

- Review all incidents and accidents with their Manager, and implement actions where applicable.
- Consult with the Safety Coordinator, to ensure that all proper safety precautions are being taken.
- Ensure that all employees and volunteers receive safety training before starting work with the organisation, and when commencing new duties.
- Ensure participants are aware of relevant safety procedures and precautions.
- Read the Safety Statement and know where a copy of the Safety Statement is in an easily accessible place e.g. on a notice-board.
- Continue to develop safer practices within their programmes.
- Assist the Safety Coordinator with inspections, audits and all Health and Safety matters

Project Leaders have direct responsibility during a project for:

- Reading and retaining a copy of the Safety Statement and ensuring that a Project Safety Form is completed and signed by all necessary persons before the project commences.

- Ensuring that safety guidelines (both from the FOCUS Safety Statement and of any host organisations e.g. schools) are followed during the project for which they are responsible.
- Ensuring that all volunteers receive a briefing in safety procedures and precautions that are relevant to their involvement during training sessions before start of a project.
- Conducting a daily/monthly inspection (residential/non-residential projects respectively), using the forms in the appendix of FOCUS' Safety Statement to ensure that procedures are being followed.

Volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Report to the project leader, or another FOCUS staff member, all accidents, near misses, or damage to either site or equipment, whether persons are injured or not.
- Adhere to instructions given by FOCUS staff or project leaders.
- Offer suggestions where necessary for the improvement of Health and Safety within the organisation.
- Wear or use, as appropriate, safety equipment and devices provided for their use as detailed in volunteer training.
- Take reasonable care for the Health and Safety of themselves and other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work

Safeguarding Policy

1. Statement of intent

FOCUS is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all young people, and will take all reasonable steps to protect them from neglect and physical, sexual or emotional harm. Paid staff, volunteers and trustees will, at all times, show respect for and understanding of the rights, safety and welfare of the young people accessing our services, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of FOCUS.

FOCUS' Safeguarding Policy arises from the following principles:

- The young person's welfare is paramount.
- All young people, regardless of age, disability, gender or ethnic origin have a right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report concerns, but it is the responsibility of Children and Young People's Services and/or Police to determine whether or not abuse has taken place.
- Confidentiality will be upheld at all times and in line with the Data Protection Act.
- There is a consistent understanding of acceptable behaviour of young people towards other young people within any organised activity, service or programme.
- Discrimination, prejudice and oppressive behaviour or language is unacceptable within all our activities, programmes or services.

This policy and associated procedures have been produced in line with The Children Act 1989 & 2004, and in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006. It is approved and endorsed by the Board of Trustees, and will be adopted by FOCUS employees, volunteers, trustees, the young people involved in our activities and their parents/carers, as FOCUS works to promote a safe environment for all involved.

2. Aim of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to outline the practice and procedures for all paid and voluntary staff within FOCUS, in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people accessing our services and activities. It is aimed at protecting the young person and the worker, recognising the risks involved in working with children and young people.

This policy relates to children and young people under the age of 18 and to vulnerable people over the age of 18. The term 'young people' will be used to include those under 18 years old and vulnerable adults.

3. Responsibilities

FOCUS will:

- Implement procedures to provide a duty of care for young people, safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of young people.
- Ensure that all our paid staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supervised.
- Carefully assess all risks that young people encounter, and taking all necessary steps to minimise and manage such risks.
- Let parents/carers and young people know how to voice concerns or complaints about anything they might be unhappy about.
- Give parents/carers, young people and workers information about what we do and what can be expected of us.

4. Facts about abuse

Child abuse occurs when a child or young person has suffered from, or is at significant risk of suffering from, ill-treatment or impairment of development, by any person who knowingly colludes with or fails to prevent the ill-treatment of the child or young person by not ensuring reasonable standards of care and protection.

- All staff and volunteers should be aware that abusers are not just strangers. They can include parents, carers, family members, friends, people in positions of trust and authority, other children or young people, or anyone who has contact with children and young people.
- Children an young people who are abused are often abused by an adult they know and trust.
- Disabled children and young people are more vulnerable to abuse; they are more dependent on intimate care and occasionally they may be less able to tell or escape from abusive situations.
- Misunderstandings and misinterpretations of different cultural and religious beliefs often mean that children and young people from these communities and families may be more vulnerable to abuse going undetected.
- It is important to remember that, although most abusers are men, women also abuse, and that abusers come from all social and ethnic backgrounds and professions.

5. Types of abuse

There are different types of abuse, which may include:

Physical Abuse
May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Sexual Abuse
Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional Abuse
The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- Telling a child they are worthless, unloved or inadequate
- Valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child
- Overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- A child seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying
- Causing a child to frequently feel frightened or in danger
- Exploitation or corruption of a child

Neglect
Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in
the serious impairment of the child's health and development. Neglect may occur:

- During pregnancy as a result of substance abuse
- Failure to provide adequate food and clothing
- Failing to provide shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
- Failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger
- Failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

Discriminatory Abuse
Discriminatory Abuse includes racist, religious, sexist, homophobic, and disabilist abuse.

Bullying
See FOCUS' Anti-Bullying Policy.

5. Indications of abuse

There are certain signs of abuse, both in a young person's appearance and behaviour, which may alert an individual to the possibility that abuse is occurring.

Some of these signs are common to all types of abuse; others are more specific.

Knowing the signs to be aware of is essential for recognising a real or potential problem. However, the presence of any one sign in itself may not necessarily mean abuse is occurring, and conversely, a young person who is being abused may show none of the obvious signs. Such factors make the issue of child abuse more complex, but all concerns and suspicions should be reported and acted upon accordingly.

Indications that a young person may be being abused include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- The young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her
- Someone else (young person or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another young person
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or emotions such as becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour, sexually explicit talk inappropriate to the young person's age
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Uncharacteristic eating disorders, depression and suicide attempts
- The young person may become withdrawn, introverted and depressed and have low self-esteem and lack of confidence

It is not your responsibility as members of FOCUS to decide whether or not child abuse is occurring, but it is your responsibility to act on those concerns and do something about it.

Safeguarding Procedures

1. Safeguarding Officer

There will be a named person for safeguarding young people who will be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the safeguarding of young people. This person is currently **Matt Lilley, Director**.

The role of the designated person is to:

- Ensure that FOCUS' Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are followed.
- Ensure they, and other staff members know how to make contact with social care and police staff responsible for dealing with safeguarding children concerns both during and after office hours.
- Act as a source of advice on safeguarding young people matters within FOCUS, and seek further advice and guidance from Leicestershire Safeguarding Children Board as appropriate.
- Ensure that a record is kept of any concerns about a young person or adult and of any conversation or referrals to statutory agencies.
- Ensure that any such record is kept safely and securely.

2. Staff and volunteer recruitment and selection

FOCUS recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse young people in some way and that all necessary steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with them.

Due to its work with children, FOCUS is exempt from regulations governing the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Therefore all staff and volunteer applicants for positions within FOCUS are required to disclose on their Application Form all previous criminal convictions, even if they are "spent" convictions. Any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.

1. All potential candidates for both paid and voluntary positions within FOCUS will be asked to complete a FOCUS application form.
2. All potential candidates will be interviewed by a panel consisting of a minimum of two FOCUS staff members*.
3. If a person is thought to be suitable for a role, a minimum of two written references will be taken up and may be confirmed by telephone.
4. All staff, volunteers and trustees offered a role within FOCUS will be subject to an Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) check. If staff, volunteers and trustees are in possession of a clear CRB check that was carried out in the 6-months prior to their appointment with FOCUS and are willing and able to present the original disclosure certificate, FOCUS will allow them to begin work, whilst another check is carried out.
5. Employees and volunteers will have an Enhanced CRB check every 3 years.
6. If a CRB disclosure reveals a criminal record, this will not automatically ban the person from working at FOCUS. FOCUS will discuss the offence with the applicant and take into consideration the circumstances of the offence, the type of offence, when committed etc. and assess fairly to ensure fair appointment and selection.
7. All paid positions are subject to a probationary period within which time the effectiveness of the delivery, performance and suitability for the post shall be monitored by FOCUS.

With the exception of potential volunteers recruited by the* ***v**involved team, who will have an informal meeting with a member of the* ***v****involved team.*

3. Staff and volunteer training

All staff and volunteers working within FOCUS will receive information and basic training in safe conduct and what to do if they have concerns about a young person. This will include information on recognising where there are concerns about a young person, and where to get advice.

Training levels should be appropriate to the employee's contact with young people and their responsibilities for child welfare within FOCUS:

- Employees working <u>directly</u> with young people (e.g. Challenge Programme Managers, Youth Volunteer Adviser) must attend recognised safeguarding children awareness training (e.g. training run by the local Safeguarding Children Board) as soon as this can be arranged following their appointment. This training must be updated every 2 years.
- Employees who may have indirect contact with young people during the course of their work e.g. Office Manager must receive advisory information and Safeguarding Children awareness training from the Safeguarding Officer.
- For sessional workers and volunteers, such as the Inspire Residential Core Team, Challenge Programme Team Advisors, and volunteers attending residential projects in a supporting role, safeguarding children will be part of their induction training.

4. Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct

Always remember that while you are caring for young people you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind at all times.

Do Not:

- Use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
- Give lifts in your own car, unless prior arrangements have been made with all relevant people, i.e. parents/carers, your line manager, and there is appropriate business insurance on the car.
- Use non-prescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol.
- Allow a young person to use discriminatory, demeaning or offensive language unchallenged.
- Behave in a way that frightens or demeans any young person.
- Use racist, sexist, discriminatory, demeaning or offensive language.
- Invite young people to your house or arrange to see them outside the set activity times.
- Disclose your personal address, personal email address or telephone number to a young person
- Engage in a sexual relationship with a young person.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a young person.
- Engage in rough or physical games, including horseplay.
- Let allegations a young person makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted

upon.
- Rely upon your good name to protect you or believe “it could never happen to me.”
- Give young people presents or personal items*.

**Exceptions could be: buying a young person a small birthday token or leaving present. Any gift should come from FOCUS and be given in a professional capacity and be agreed with a senior staff member. Similarly do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations (e.g. birthdays, Christmas), which you should mention to your line manager.*

Do:
- Exercise caution about being alone with a young person. In situations where this is unavoidable, ensure another worker or volunteer knows what you are doing and where you are (see FOCUS’ Lone-Working Policy).
- Ensure that any physical contact is open and initiated by the young person’s needs, e.g. for help with personal care. Always prompt young people to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help.
- Talk explicitly to young people about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- Listen to young people about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- Listen to young people and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.
- Work as a team with your colleagues. Agree with them what behaviour you expect from young people and be consistent enforcing it.
- Remember if you have to speak to a young person about their behaviour you are challenging ‘what they did’ not who they are’.
- Make sure you have read the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a young person may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns.
- Where possible encourage parents/carers to take responsibility for their own children.

5. Dealing with accidents, misunderstandings or other incidents

It is imperative that a note be kept of all complaints, injuries or behaviours that cause concern and that these are recorded on the Incident Report Form (**Appendix 3**).

An Incident Report Form should be completed, if a young person:
- Suffers any form of accident whilst with a FOCUS staff member or volunteer
- Becomes distressed in any way or misunderstands or misinterprets something that has been said or done whilst attending a FOCUS project or activity.

This form should then be passed to the Safeguarding Officer or other FOCUS senior staff member, who will, where appropriate, inform the young person’s parents/carers.

6. What you should do if a young person makes a disclosure

1. Stay calm. Do not let your shock show.
2. Listen very carefully to what is being said without interrupting, and allow the young person to speak at their own pace.
3. Explain to the young person that you will have to share the information, that you cannot keep it secret.
4. Make it clear to the young person that you are taking what they say seriously.
5. Do <u>not</u> press the young person, ask leading questions or probe for information.
6. Reassure the young person that they were right to tell and recognise that it is

difficult to talk about these things.

7. Let the young person know what will happen next, who you will report the information to, and what will happen once it has been reported.
8. Do not make any promises to the young person.
9. Act immediately – do not delay.
10. Do not take sole responsibility - seek advice as soon as possible.
11. Keep a detailed record of the incident and your concerns by completing an Incident Report Form (see **Appendix 3**). Make sure that you record exactly what happened and what was said in the young person's own words, without interpreting it into your own words.

7. Procedures to follow when making a referral

It is important that all FOCUS staff and volunteers are aware of the reporting procedures if they have a concern about child protection or a young person's welfare.

They should:

1. Refer their concerns to the Safeguarding Officer.
2. In the absence of this officer, then refer their concerns to the most senior employee available, who will be responsible for making the phone call to children's social care.
3. If no FOCUS staff members are available, the person discovering or being informed of the abuse should immediately inform children's social care.

Referrals should be made to the social care service where the young person lives (see useful contacts list, **Appendix 4**).

When contacting children's social care:

1. Make it clear you are making a referral about child protection.
2. Make a record of:
    - The name and position of the member of staff in children's social care or police officer to whom the concerns were passed
    - The time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.

Referrals made by telephone to social care must be followed up in writing within 24 hours.

See Appendix 1 – A Quick Guide to Procedures

When you are making a referral regarding child protection concerns, it is important to have the following information wherever possible readily available for the duty social worker:

- Name, date of birth, ethnic origin, gender of the young person, address and telephone numbers;
- The reasons for your concern;
- Injuries and/or other indicators observed;
- The young person's first language;
- Details of any specific needs of the young person e.g. disability etc;
- Details of family members, if known;
- Other agencies, professionals involved;
- Family doctor

Lack of any of the above should not delay referral if concerns are immediate.

The Incident Report Form can be found in **Appendix 3**. This form will enable employees to record the important information as highlighted above.

Following the referral of a child, the referrer and the Social Care Service must be clear about who will be taking what action.

Not all young people are able to express themselves verbally. In this instance, where there are concerns, an Incident Report Form (**Appendix 3**) should be completed and the same procedures for making a referral followed.

The same approach should be taken if the disclosure, suspicion, or allegation comes from an adult.

8. If in doubt

If you are not sure what to do, contact the FOCUS' Safeguarding Officer or another FOCUS senior staff member.

In addition there are several sources of advice available. These are:
- The duty social worker of the relevant social care service (see **Appendix 4**).
- The NSPCC 24-hour free phone Helpline on 0808 800 5000

9. Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a *"need to know basis"* only. This includes to the following people:

- **The Safeguarding Officer.**
- **Social care/police.**
- **The young person making the allegation's parents/carers.**
- **The parents or carers of the young person who is alleged to have been abused.**
- **The person making the allegation.**
- **The alleged abuser (and their parents/carers if the abuser is a child)*.**

******Where there is any possibility that a criminal act may have been committed, e.g. physical or sexual abuse, do not pass on any information before contacting the police and/or children's social care. Care should be taken not to take any action that may jeopardise any subsequent criminal investigation, this includes contacting the alleged perpetrator.***

Information should be stored in a secure place with access limited to designated people, in line with FOCUS' Confidentiality Policy and Data Protection legislation.

10. Support

For the reporting of suspected abuse

It is acknowledged that feelings generated by the discovery that a member of staff or volunteer is, or may be, abusing a young person, will raise concerns among other staff or volunteers. This includes the difficulties inherent in reporting such matters.

FOCUS assures all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his or her concern about a colleague's practice or the possibility that a child or vulnerable adult may be being abused.

For the person against whom an allegation is made

To be the subject of an allegation can be very stressful. While FOCUS has a duty to ensure that all allegations are thoroughly investigated it also has a duty to its staff and volunteers. While an investigation is being carried out, it is important that there is a senior member of staff who is tasked to maintain contact with the person (whether suspended or not) and keep them informed of the progress of the allegation and what steps are being taken. No information should be given about the detail of the allegation without careful consultation with the investigating agencies.

11. Types of Investigation

Where there is a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation (undertaken by the police)
- A child or adult protection investigation (undertaken by social care/police)
- A disciplinary investigation (undertaken by FOCUS). *See FOCUS Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.*

Civil proceedings may also be initiated by the person/family of the person who alleged the abuse.

Internal Enquires and Suspension

- FOCUS can and will make immediate decisions on whether or not any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended from duty.

  If an allegation or suspicion of abuse is made or exists about a staff member or volunteer, they will be asked, without prejudice, to leave the project if young people are still present.

- Irrespective of the findings of the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board or Police enquiries, FOCUS will assess all individual cases under its misconduct/disciplinary procedures, to decide whether or not a member of staff can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled with other staff or volunteers.

  This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, FOCUS will make an informed decision based on available information that could suggest, on a balance probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of all young people participating in all FOCUS activities or services is and will always remain paramount.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1 - A Quick Guide to Procedures

Action to take when concerns about a young person are raised through direct disclosure or observation, or a young person discloses to you.

You have concerns about a young person's welfare.

↓

If the young person requires urgent medical attention call an ambulance and inform the hospital doctor that you have a child protection concern.

↓

Discuss your concerns with the Safeguarding Officer. If they are unavailable, speak to your manager and/or senior colleagues.

↓

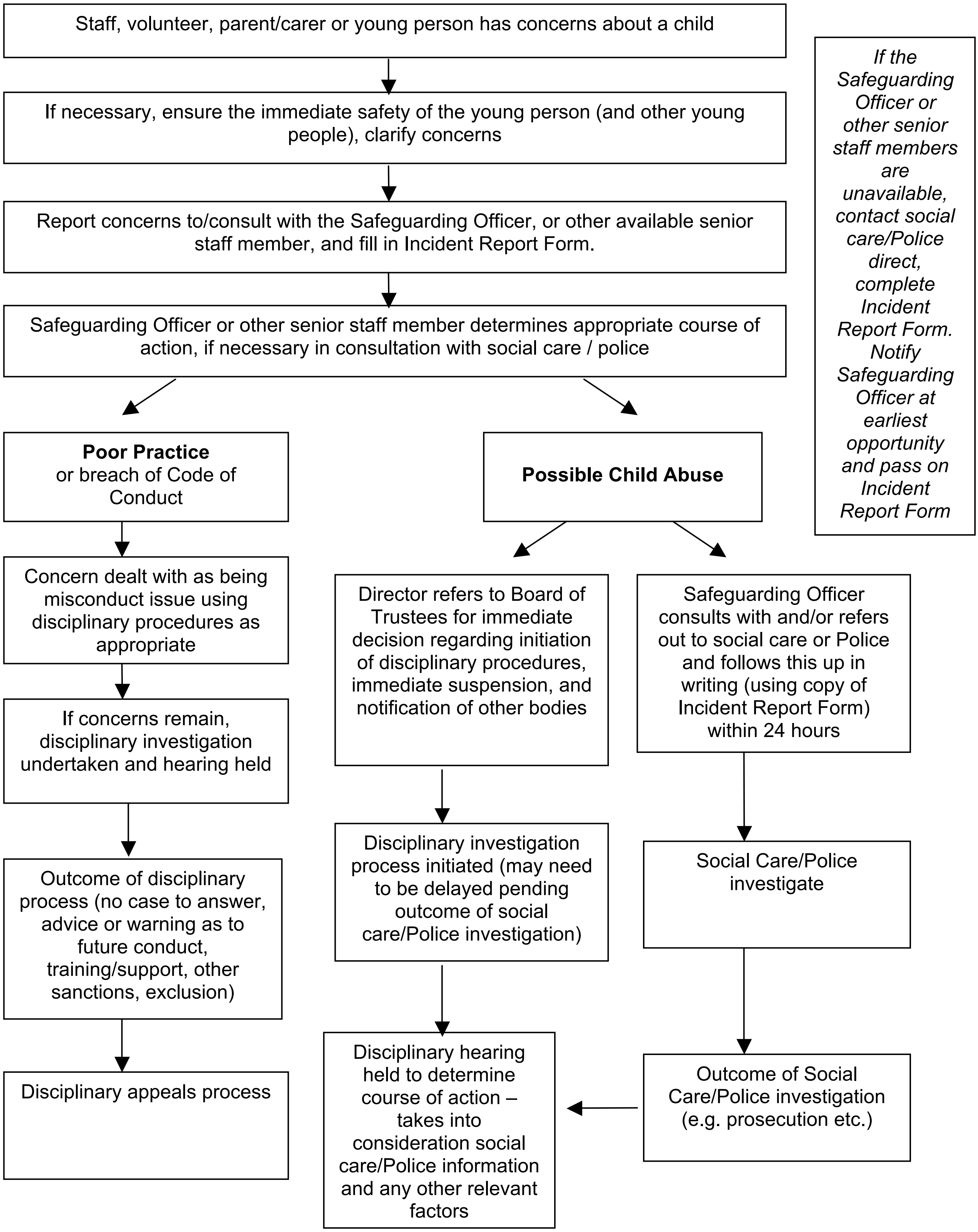
Refer to appropriate Children's Social Care Services.

↓

Complete an incident report form immediately, and forward to the appropriate Children's Social Care Services within 24 hours.

Appendix 2 – Dealing with concerns about staff and volunteers

This guide is designed to inform the most appropriate action in relation to concerns about the behaviour of FOCUS staff members or volunteers.



Appendix 3 - Incident Report Form

All accidents, complaints, misunderstandings, or allegations or suspicions of abuse should be recorded as close as possible to the time of the incident. Details of incidents should be recorded in as much detail and as accurately as possible. Any disclosures of abuse being made by young people should be a reflection if what was actually said. Do not try and interpret any of the information, just record what was said or witnessed.

1. YOUR DETAILS	
Your name:	
Your Position:	**Contact No:**

2. YOUNG PERSON'S DETAILS	
Young person's name:	**Date of birth:**
Young person's address:	
What is the young person's ethnic origin?	
Has the young person got any special needs, e.g. a disability? If yes, please give details:	

3. PARENT/CARERS DETAILS	
Parent/Carers name:	**Contact no:**
Parent/Carers address:	
Relationship to young person:	

4. DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT / DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE
Name of person disclosing information:
Time and date of incident / disclosure:
Name of person about whom allegation has been made (if given):
Details of the incident, allegation or disclosure. *Please ensure the account is factual; DO NOT include opinions/assumptions of either yourself or others. Include dates, times, incidents and any other potentially useful information. If the disclosure has come from a young person, use their words. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.*

6. ACTION TAKEN
Details of actions taken so far:
Details of actions you intend to take:
Name and contact details for witnesses to the incident:

7. DETAILS OF WHOM THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PASSED TO	
Name:	**Position:**
Organisation:	**Contact no:**
Date and time that the information was forwarded:	
Agreed action:	
Name:	**Position:**
Organisation:	**Contact no:**
Date and time that the information was forwarded:	
Agreed action:	

Your signature:	**Date:**

Appendix 4 – Useful contacts

If you do make the decision to contact Children's Social Care, you will need to know in which area of Leicestershire or Nottinghamshire he/she lives.

Leicester City **Mon-Thur 8.30am-5pm, Fri 8.30am-4.30pm**	
Children & Young People's Service	0116 253 1191

Leicestershire **Mon-Thur 8.30am-5pm, Fri 8.30am-4.30pm**	
Blaby, Oadby & Wigston	0116 278 7111
Charnwood	01509 266641
Harborough	01858 465331
Hinckley	01455 636964
Melton	01664 564698
North West Leicestershire	01530 275200

Rutland **Mon-Thur 8.30am-5pm, Fri 8.30am-4.30pm**	
Children and Young People's Service	01572 722577

Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland **Out of office hours**	
Emergency Duty Team	0116 255 1606

Police	
Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	0116 222 2222

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

At FOCUS we will always strive to ensure that everyone with whom we work receives a high quality and professional service from us.

However, there may be occasions when we receive a complaint from a stakeholder and it is vital that we follow the procedures laid out in this document in dealing with these. In doing so, we will improve our chances of maintaining good working relationships with all of our stakeholders and reduce the chances that our reputation is adversely affected.

Following these procedures will also ensure that we learn from any mistakes we make and that our services continue to be developed and improved.

Informal Complaints
Typically, informal complaints are those that are received verbally or by informal means of communication such as email or text message. They may also include feedback or evaluation forms we receive that demonstrate low levels of satisfaction.

In all such cases the following procedure will be adopted:

1. The person receiving the complaint will firstly inform their line manager of the nature of the complaint. If received by the Director, the report will be made to another member of the Strategy Team.

2. With their line manager, the person receiving the complaint will discuss and agree an appropriate written response, which will be sent within 10 working days. The response will not represent an admission of guilt or an acceptance of all the accusations made in the complaint, but will address the following:
   - Acknowledge the nature of the complaint
   - Appreciate the concerns that the complainant has
   - State our aims to always offer a high quality of service and to take any complaints or concerns seriously
   - Offer to meet with the complainant to discuss their concerns further

3. Within 1 month of receiving the complaint a review of the circumstances leading to it will be carried out, involving the person receiving the complaint, their line manager and any other relevant parties.

4. All notes from this review will be recorded and stored in order that a further response can be drafted, should the complainant make further contact.

5. Any recommendations from the review will be implemented

It is hoped that in following this procedure an informal complaint will not escalate to a formal complaint and the complainant will feel that they have been heard and their concerns addressed.

Formal Complaints
A formal complaint will usually take the form of a written representation, but could also include verbal reports or emails or text messages if the complainant states that they wish to register a complaint.

In all such cases the following procedure will be adopted:

1. The person receiving the complaint will inform their line manager and the Director, who will in turn inform the Board of Trustees.

2. The Director (or a delegated staff member or trustee) will then, following discussion with any relevant parties, prepare a written response, which will be sent within 10 working days. As with informal complaints, this will not represent an admission of guilt or acceptance of all the accusations made, but will address the following:
   - Acknowledge the nature of the complaint
   - Appreciate the concerns that the complainant has
   - State our aims to always offer a high quality of service and to take any complaints or concerns seriously
   - Offer to meet with the complainant to discuss their concerns further
   - Commit to addressing any issues raised in the complaint and offering to feedback the outcome of a review of the circumstances leading to it

3. Within 1 month of receiving the complaint a review of the circumstances leading to it will be carried out, involving the person receiving the complaint, their line manager, the Director, any trustee who expresses a wish to be involved and any other relevant parties.

4. From this review a report will be written and stored in order that a further response can be drafted, should the complainant request it. This will be sent to all parties involved in the review and to the Board of Trustees.

5. Any recommendations from the review will be implemented

In Conclusion
It is important to state that these procedures must not be viewed as a way to placate complainants, but are part of our commitment to providing a high quality service. Any complaint must be taken seriously and reviewed objectively.

By dealing with complaints promptly and thoroughly we can further develop our services, improve relationships with our stakeholders and learn from our mistakes in order that they are not repeated. Even if it is found that a complaint is not entirely justified, it should be noted that our perception of events may not match with the perception of our stakeholders and that they can only know what they see and hear from us.

FOCUS

CHALLENGE PROGRAMME

APPENDICES

FOCUS

Inspiring People, Changing Communities