1) Safeguarding & Child Protection Procedures

Where safeguarding or child protection disclosures are made by a child, or there are observed safeguarding or child protection concerns, the following actions must be taken:

1. Refer the child to the contract and the fact that you will have to tell the Place2Be staff member / school.

2. Immediately after the session, the Place2Be staff member or Counsellor on Placement must make a note of the disclosure or concerns, using the exact words of the child where possible (if this needs to be paraphrased, this must be made clear on the form). Where the concern has been observed by a Place2Be Counsellor on Placement, they must immediately notify the Place2Be staff member in the school.

3. The Place2Be staff member must then immediately notify their Area Manager. If their Area Manager is not available, they must go directly to the designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in the school or Children’s Centre and make a joint decision about the level of risk and actions required. They must then advise their Area Manager of the actions taken.

4. The Place2Be staff member must then input the information onto the School Services System (SSS). In some circumstances, schools may require us to input this onto their own database such as CPOMs / myconcern / Safeguard. Where this isn’t possible, Place2Be staff must send a downloaded copy of the SSS form via encrypted email to the CPO / DSL requesting a Mark Read receipt.

In the absence of a Place2Be staff member, Counsellors on Placement must inform their Area Manager, so that they can input the concern onto SSS for them. If the Area Manager is absent or on

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leave, the Regional Director and Place2Be’s Safeguarding Team must be notified. The Area Manager must Mark Read the concern on SSS once they have reviewed it.

5. The SSS form should then be regularly updated with the school’s actions.

6. Place2Be staff must update SSS and their Area Manager of progress and maintain an oversight of the case. They should also report on the progress of the case via ‘line-management’ sessions with their Area Manager.

7. Once Place2Be and the school are satisfied that sufficient actions have been taken to safeguard the child, either by ourselves or external agencies, the concern on the system can be changed from being an ‘Open’ case to an ‘Agreement Requested’ case. Place2Be’s Safeguarding Team approve closure on all concerns. The completed form should then be downloaded again and sent to the school CPO / DSL for their agreement via encrypted email and password protected.

NB 1: If you are unable to record the concern on SSS before 5pm, you must contact your Area Manager and the Place2Be Safeguarding Team (try all contact numbers) to discuss the concern so that the actions can be agreed upon before the end of the working day. Record the concern on SSS as soon as possible on your next working day and note that it has been discussed with your Area Manager / Place2Be Safeguarding Team and the actions agreed.

NB 2: Where there has been agreement to record sessions and a safeguarding concern is raised, please advise your Area Manager immediately and follow Place2Be’s ‘Policy on use of Clinical Materials’

NB 3: A separate safeguarding concern must be raised on SSS for each disclosure or concern about a child. Consideration should be always be given on the designated threshold of a concern if there are accumulating issues to ensure there is an holistic overview of the risk to a child.

NB 4: Decisions on the concern’s threshold should be made by Place2Be school-based staff and they should consult with their Area Manager or Place2Be’s Safeguarding Team if required. Changes to the threshold can only be made by the Area Manager or Place2Be’s Safeguarding Team.

NB 5: Staff must continue to refer to Place2Be’s Threshold Criteria and Expected Responses documents in managing concerns.

The Safeguarding Concern Form must be completed and discussed with the school’s designated CPO / DSL as soon as possible on the same day as the disclosure or concern coming to Place2Be’s attention. Staff should ensure that they speak to their Area Managers that day by phone.

Area Managers must ensure that there is a contingency plan in place for occasions when they are not in the school, and for when the CPO / DSL in the school is not available. If the CPO / DSL is not available, concerns must not be left without speaking to a member of school management and an action being agreed.

Please note: In addition to Place2Be forms, staff and Counsellors on Placement may be required to complete additional forms in line with local area or school policy and procedures.
2) **Emergency Actions**

If you believe an individual is at imminent risk of harm / threat to life, please contact the emergency services on 999. Please then notify the DSL / CPO, your Line Manager and the Safeguarding Team at Place2Be immediately.

3) **School Holidays**

It is important that children and young people are signposted to relevant support organisations when schools (and therefore Place2Be) are closed. Children and young people should be aware that they should not contact Place2Be staff for support during holiday periods. Place2Be staff should have appropriate ‘out-of-office’ automatic emails in place when they are not at work including details on:

- your dates of being unavailable
- other support options in the meantime (e.g. text and helpline numbers)
- guidance on what to do in an emergency (e.g. attend A&E, contact the Police)

However, if Place2Be staff are contacted by a young person when the school is closed and there is a safeguarding concern, Place2Be staff should immediately contact their Area Manager and the Place2Be Safeguarding Team to discuss what actions are required.

4) **Managing Concerns of Self-Harm or Suicide Ideation**

Place2Be has dedicated risk assessment and safety planning documentation to support staff in managing concerns regarding self-harm or suicide ideation. It's important to note that the risk assessment can be used at any time with either children or adults regardless of risk; however, a risk assessment must be completed if there is a disclosure of significant risk for a child e.g., you are concerned about them leaving the school or they have disclosed a plan to harm themselves. The full guidance and supporting documentation can be found [here](#) and staff should ensure they continue to follow the child protection procedures at all times.

5) **Serious Incidents**

The Charity Commission requires charities to report serious incidents. If a serious safeguarding incident takes place within Place2Be, it is important that a prompt, full and frank disclosure is made to the commission. Place2Be will need to report what happened, and importantly, let the Commission know how we are dealing with it, even if it has already been reported to the police, donors, or another regulator. A serious incident relating to safeguarding is defined a harm to Place2Be’s beneficiaries, staff, Counsellors on Placement or others who come into contact with Place2Be through its work.

6) **Working Virtually and Safeguarding Procedures**

Safeguarding of those who avail of our services is a fundamental role we all play. This is true when we are working face to face, remotely or virtually. Our policies and procedures remain the same irrespective of how we are delivering our services.

**Please follow the steps below, should you have a safeguarding concern when working remotely/virtually:**

- You must contact the school CPO / DSL and or Headteacher and your Area Manager, as per our normal policy and procedures.
If you are unable to inform your Area Manager, then please contact the Place2Be Safeguarding Team, as you do now. The concern should then be input onto SSS by the end of the working day.

**Working remotely and virtually presents new and unique issues for example:**

- A child, young person or family member might say or do something that makes you concerned
- You might notice a change in an individual’s behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn and anxious or being angry and aggressive.
- An individual might seem particularly tired or report they have not slept.
- An individual may have physical injuries that are unexplained.

*If you think an individual is in immediate danger, you should contact the police on 999.* For other concerns please follow our regular safeguarding policies and expected responses guidance.

To read the full guidance on working remotely and virtually, please [click here](#).

**7) Safeguarding Database**

All Safeguarding Concerns are added to SSS. High Threshold cases will be monitored on a regular basis by the Place2Be Safeguarding Team, who also provide regular reports to the Executive Team and Trustees. All safeguarding cases will be classified as either ‘Agreed Action Taken’ or ‘Open’. Area Managers and Place2Be staff will be required to monitor open safeguarding cases on SSS, and report on actions taken and the progress of each case. This monitoring and overview is important to ensure that cases do not drift, and that risks to vulnerable children are managed effectively. When all actions to safeguard an individual have been taken, you can ‘Request Agreement’ on SSS, so that the Place2Be Safeguarding Team can sign off.

**8) Record Keeping and Information Sharing**

The need to share information about child protection is paramount and overrides the confidential nature of the work. However, it is important that safeguarding concerns and information about vulnerable children are handled carefully:

- Where forms are stored electronically, steps must be taken to ensure that this is kept secure, e.g. use of computer password, and password lock when leaving the computer unattended.
- Safeguarding Forms must always be completed on the day on which the disclosure is made or the concerns arise.
- Only Place2Be’s email system should be used for the electronic transmission of documentation. *Personal email accounts must never be used for this purpose.*
- Wherever documents are posted, the envelope must be marked “Strictly Private and Confidential”.
- Information about children must be shared on a “need to know” basis within the school and within Place2Be.

*Please also refer to Place2Be’s ‘Confidentiality and Information Sharing’ policy which gives further details about these requirements.*
9) Disputes, Challenges or Concerns

If, at any stage, there is a disagreement or concern about a safeguarding case, Place2Be staff must consult their Area Manager immediately and the Regional Director and Head of Safeguarding must also be notified.

Examples of such disagreements or concerns are:

- Concerns by Place2Be staff or Counsellor on Placement that the school has not fulfilled its duties in dealing with a referral.
- Concerns about a delay in a case being designated High or Low threshold, or in a case being progressed by the school.
- Lack of feedback from a school about the outcome of a referral.
- Concerns about the response of the local authority to a referral by a school.
- Differences of opinion within Place2Be’s team about a case.
- Concerns expressed by the school about the manner in which Place2Be has handled a child protection issue.
- Concerns that a member of staff or Counsellor on Placement from Place2Be has not followed the policy.

The school’s Safeguarding Policy should describe the mediation procedures which are to be used in circumstances where there is disagreement concerning the referral of an individual concern.

Place2Be reserves the right to make a referral to statutory agencies if the school is reluctant to do this, and if this is considered to be in the child or adult’s best interests. This is written into our contract with schools. In such circumstances, there must be a discussion involving the Place2Be staff member’s line-manager, Regional Director, Head of Safeguarding and Director of Operations.

Under government guidance, local areas now have multi-agency escalation / dispute resolution protocols. Place2Be staff are required to use these protocols, in consultation with their Area Manager, should they disagree with a decision made by another agency with regards to safeguarding children.

The relevant sections of the School Contract are attached to this policy (Appendix 2).
Appendix 1

Child Protection Flowchart

Place2Be staff member becomes concerned about the safety or welfare of a child. They must then reference the contract and advise that they need to tell the school.

Place2Be Counsellor on Placement becomes concerned about the safety or welfare of a child. They must then reference the contract and advise that they need to tell the Place2Be staff member. The Counsellor on Placement must then immediately inform the Place2Be staff member.

The Place2Be staff member must then record the concern on Place2Be’s School Services System (SSS) and immediately report it to the school’s CPO / DSL. The Place2Be staff member’s Area Manager must be informed.

The school’s CPO / DSL and Place2Be staff member should then jointly make a decision about the level of risk and actions required.

For both Low and High threshold concerns, the Place2Be staff member must regularly review progress of the concern with the school and record updates / actions on SSS. Area Managers must always be kept up to date on the progress of concerns.

Once Place2Be and the school are satisfied that sufficient actions have been taken to safeguard the child, either by ourselves or external agencies, the concern on the system can be changed from being an ‘Open’ case to an ‘Agreement Requested’ case. Place2Be’s Safeguarding Team approve closure on all safeguarding concerns.

Any disagreements or concerns by any party must be shared with the staff member’s Area Manager, Regional Director and the Place2Be Safeguarding Team.

NB: Counsellors on Placement and those without access to SSS must inform their Place2Be Line Manager immediately after their session. (If their Line Manager is unavailable or cannot be reached, they must go to the school’s designated CPO / DSL immediately and also inform their Place2Be subsequent Line Manager.)
Appendix 2

The contract between Place2Be and the school states:

All Place2Be staff are required to complete mandatory Safeguarding training, which is delivered by the Place2Be Safeguarding Team. Training is updated annually for all School Based Staff.

Place2Be will ensure that Place2Be personnel comply with Place2Be’s and the School’s Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures as provided in writing. Place2Be personnel will report any concern they may have concerning actual or potential abuse of, or risk to, any child, or concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a child, to the School’s Designated Child Protection Officer / Lead using the School’s internal child protection system (e.g. CPOMS, myConcern, Safeguard) or via encrypted email using the Place2Be Safeguarding Form.

We require the School to take appropriate action upon any report by Place2Be of abuse made by a child to the School’s Child Protection Officer. We also require the School to keep us updated of the outcome of such action. We reserve the right to escalate reports to the school’s local authority area services (e.g. children’s services, CAMHS) if necessary.

Place2Be will provide confirmation to the School that all appropriate checks including the Disclosure Barring Scheme (or other appropriate body), have been carried out in respect of Place2Be personnel.
Appendix 3 – High or Low Threshold?

Place2Be has a two-tier threshold system and decision-making on actions to be undertaken must be a joint process between Place2Be and the school.

It is useful to first think of safeguarding as being on a spectrum. At the bottom of this spectrum would be ‘Prevention’ (e.g. raising awareness of e-safety with all children within the school) and at the other end of this spectrum would be ‘Child Protection’ (the activity taken to protect children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm).

When thinking about significant harm, it is important to also include the risks that children pose to themselves (e.g. self-harm or suicide ideation/intent). Somewhere in the middle of this spectrum would be ‘Early Help’.

When a safeguarding concern is raised, based on the information available, think about where it may be positioned on the spectrum:

- If it is indicating, or potentially indicating, that a child has suffered harm, or is at risk of suffering harm, then it should be considered **High Threshold**.

- If it is not indicating harm, or potential harm, then it is more likely to be on the lower end of the spectrum, and therefore should be considered **Low Threshold**.

**NB1:** Any disclosure of physical abuse, self-harm, suicide ideation, or sexual abuse must be raised as High Threshold.

**NB2:** If there is current social care / social work involvement with a child or young person, any concern must always be raised as High Threshold.

**NB3:** Changes in threshold can only be made by Area Managers or the Place2Be Safeguarding Team.

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![Spectrum Diagram](image-url)
Appendix 4 – Expected Responses / Thresholds

Place2Be’s Safeguarding Team monitor all high-threshold concerns while Area Managers monitor both high and low threshold concerns on a daily basis. Decisions about the level of risk and actions required should be made jointly between the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Child Protection Officer (CPO) and Place2Be’s School-based staff (SBS).

Place2Be have expectations of the minimum best practice actions that should be taken following a disclosure of the following risks:

Self-Harm & Suicidal Ideation

Place2Be expects that for any disclosure of self-harm or suicidal ideation:

- the concern is reported immediately to the DSL / CPO at the school
- parents / carers are contacted and provided advice on the day of the disclosure
- advice is given to parents / carers about safety planning e.g. GP appointment, taking child to A&E, removing sharp or potentially harmful objects (including medication), providing Shout / Kooth details, monitoring child in the evening / at the weekend
- agreed actions must be added to SSS by the end of the school day

NB: Where there is a disclosure of significant risk for a child e.g. you are concerned about them leaving the school or they have disclosed a plan to harm themselves, a Place2Be Risk Assessment & Safety Plan must also be completed and the guidance and procedures on this can be found here.

Physical Abuse / Chastisement

Place2Be expects that for any disclosure of physical abuse / chastisement:

- the concern is reported immediately to the DSL / CPO at the school
- the child is spoken to by the DSL / CPO, or appropriate staff member, at the school
- school contact their local social care / social work department to consult on the disclosure and agree on appropriate further actions to be taken
- agreed actions must be added to SSS by the end of the school day

NB: There may be occasions where the school decide that a consultation with social care or social work is not required. These cases need to be discussed with the Place2Be Safeguarding Team and the level of risk and circumstances will be assessed to determine the best course of action.

Sexual Assault

Place2Be expects that for any disclosure of sexual assault:

- the concern is reported immediately to the DSL / CPO at the school
- the child is spoken to by the DSL / CPO, or appropriate staff member, at the school
- the concern is reported to the police to investigate further and a referral made to social care / social work
- the school undertake a risk assessment to ensure that both the victim is safeguarded within the school environment
- agreed actions and safety plan are added to SSS by the end of the school day

Some other concerns which should be raised as High Threshold include:

Child Sexual Exploitation • Child Trafficking • Domestic Violence • Eating Disorder • FGM • Grooming • Possible extremist behaviour

Please note: If you believe a child is at imminent risk of harm, please notify the DSL / CPO and call your Area Manager and the Safeguarding Team at Place2Be immediately so appropriate actions can be agreed and added to SSS before the end of the school day.