

Child Protection and Safeguarding Young People Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education is an outreach service and as such we are usually guests in other groups – we would therefore familiarise ourselves and follow the procedures of the organisation we are visiting. In the event that we are not able to do this then the following procedures apply.

We recognise the contribution we make to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, has a full and active part to play in protecting children and young people from harm. Our policy applies to all staff, volunteers and associate workers. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff, volunteers and associate workers to work with children and young people.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children and young people with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting children and young people who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which enables children and young people to raise their aspirations and change their behaviour by unleashing their true potential by means of guiding them through positive lifestyle choices.

We therefore commit ourselves to the following principles:

- To support the children and young people's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- To support the children and young peoples in their emotional, social, cultural, moral and spiritual growth
- To support children and young peoples in making healthy choices and to assert their rights
- To raise the awareness of all staff, voluntary and associate workers of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff
- To develop a structured procedure which will be followed by all staff, voluntary and associate workers in cases of suspected abuse
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies.
- To ensure that all adults which includes staff, voluntary and associate workers who have access to children and young people have been checked as to their suitability

We will achieve these aims by:

- Supporting children and young people through our Re-Connect Programme
- Supporting children and young people through referrals to other services
- Having a designated manager for child protection – to co-ordinate action
- Having a member of staff who will act in the designated manager's absence
- Ensuring that staff and adults working directly with to children and young people have had clearance from the disclosure and barring service.
- Ensuring all members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse

- Ensuring all members of staff know how to respond to a child or young person who discloses abuse
- Ensuring that we support, and train accordingly those who work with children and young people. We will provide appropriate, support, supervision and recognise mutual accountability

Safe from harm'

The Government's recommendations for voluntary organisations for safeguarding the welfare of children listed in 'Safe from Harm' are outlined below with Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education's response.

- **Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children.**
- The policy statement at the start of this document is our current policy and will be reviewed three yearly, or sooner if there are changes in legislation or guidance.
- **Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children or young people may occur.**
- This is outlined later in the document and will be maintained and regularly reviewed.
- **Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person.**
- Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education is usually guests in other groups – we would therefore follow the procedures of the organisation we are visiting.
- **Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers.**
- The procedure outlined later in this document is relevant to all staff and volunteers. Staff have access to this document on line and are given, initial training and ongoing training, supervision and support in relation to the procedures.
- **Give all staff and volunteers clear roles.**
- All our staff and volunteers are given written description of their roles.
- **Use supervision as a means of protecting children.**
- All volunteers and staff receive supervision appropriate to their roles.
- **Treat all would-be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children.**
- We have application and selection procedures, outlined later, which must be completed
- **Gain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicant's paid work or volunteering with children.**
- We require two references for someone applying to work or volunteer for Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education. Referees are informed if the work involves contact with children. However, it is not always possible to gain references relating to previous experience of working or volunteering with children, if the person has not yet had the opportunity to do so.

- **Explore all applicants' experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.**
- All staff and volunteers are interviewed prior to appointment.
- **Find out whether an applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children.**
- All workers are required to sign a declaration disclosing criminal convictions and are asked about this in the interview. We will also do a criminal record check once available, following national guidance as appropriate.
- **Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.**
- Members of staff have a three month probationary period and volunteers six months.
- **Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure and discovery of abuse.**
- The guidelines are outlined in this document and training given to all staff and volunteers who work with children.
- **Train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors and policy makers, in the prevention of child abuse.**
- Both initial and ongoing training is given.

Recruitment procedure

- The recruitment procedure for any worker who has responsibility for working with children and/or young people is as follows:
- The person is asked to complete an application form which, among other things, will require the names and addresses of two referees, details of any previous experience of working with children and/or young people, and a declaration of all previous criminal convictions and cautions, spent and unspent.
- Two references are be taken up and, among other things, the referees are asked about the candidates' suitability for working with children and young people and whether they know of any reason why the candidate should not work with children and young people.
- A criminal record check is processed.
- The person is interviewed, and, as part of the interview, is asked:
 - about their previous experience with children and/or young people;
 - whether they have any previous convictions and/or cautions, and about them if they do;
 - about their attitudes to working with children, child protection etc.

Procedures for protecting children and young people while working with them.

Work should be planned in advance to minimise possible situations where the abuse of children may occur.

- Worker should not meet with a child off the premises without it being a work organised activity
- Workers should not play physical contact games with young people nor participate in physical activities like wrestling or tickling, and should avoid inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- Similarly, children should be dissuaded from engaging in inappropriate physical or verbal contact with other children, including wrestling and tickling, and inappropriate physical contact games should be avoided.
- Where children have to be transported by a car or minibus there should be, as far as possible, more than one passenger in the vehicle
- Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education's Health and Safety procedures must be followed at all times.
- A worker must not enter into a personal relationship, sexual or otherwise, with a participant under 18.

Training and supervision

- All new workers will receive training in Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education's child protection policy and procedures.
- All workers will receive ongoing updating training as necessary.
- All workers will receive regular supervision and support regarding child protection issues.
- If a worker is accused of abuse, the worker will be suspended until investigations have taken place. A worker found guilty of such an offence will be 'guilty of serious misconduct' and merit dismissal from the organisation if a member of staff. Similarly, for a worker who has deliberately concealed convictions or cautions relating to violent crime or crimes against a child or children, this will be regarded as 'serious misconduct' and may merit dismissal.
- **Extra Procedures for Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education**
 - In normal circumstances there will be a minimum of two workers (ideally 50-50 male/female mix).
 - Details of the children will be recorded at the beginning of the intervention – name, address, age, name of parent/guardian and contact number, health details and a medical consent form signed if appropriate

Procedures:

CHILD PROTECTION (CP) AND LITE-WAVES THERAPEUTIC EDUCATION

Child abuse can manifest itself in a variety of ways. However, abuse falls into four main categories. These are:

- Neglect
- Physical abuse,
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse.

Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education has a responsibility to refer children and young people that fall into the categories listed above.

CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

The following categories of abuse are recognised for the purposes of a Child Protection Plan

Neglect: Persistently ignoring a child's or young person's health, development, not feeding, clothing or protecting him/her from danger, failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment, including failure to thrive physically, academically, socially, culturally or emotionally.

Sexual Abuse: Actual or likely abuse of a dependent or developmentally immature child or young person in sexual activities which she/he may or may not fully understand and therefore was unable to give informed consent.

Physical Abuse: Actual or likely physical injury to a child or young person, failure to prevent physical injury or suffering, aggression likely to lead to emotional harm.

Emotional abuse: Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger,
- Exploiting and corrupting children.

SIGNS OF ABUSE

Members of staff, voluntary and associate workers are well placed to observe signs of abuse, such as changes in child's behaviour or failure to develop.

All staff should be alert to any signs of possible abuse and notify the designated officer for child protection or the Assistant Child Protection Officer if the CP Officer is absent. (Using the attached Performa)

If you receive any allegation about abuse; or have any suspicions.

- Follow all steps below

- Ensure no one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise or harm.
- If it is the leader in charge who is named, *do not* go to them – go to their line manager

In ALL cases remember:

- Treat *all* suspicion of, or disclosure of, abuse seriously. Do not exaggerate or trivialise.

PROCEDURES

- Staff must immediately alert Designated Child Protection Officer of any suspicion of abuse.
- S/he will meet with the child or young person and investigate as appropriate or refer the matter to the relevant agency as appropriate
- A written report of the concern (and the conversation – quoting words actually used) should be made on the attached referral form.
- In reporting, try to write down what you have been told word-for-word. Include all details, however small or irrelevant they may seem. Include dates, times, facts, observations. Ensure there are contact details available for the child or young person. Sign and date your report **this form may be used in any subsequent court or disciplinary proceedings. No copies are to be made and the original must be kept safe, confidential, and filed in the CP folder (held in the office). All written accounts must be signed and dated.**
- Where a referral is deemed appropriate, the designated Child Protection Officer will authorise the referral form. In the absence of the Child Protection Officer, the Assistant Child Protection Officer will authorise the referral form.

ESSENTIAL GOOD PRACTICE

Any Abuse

In order to bring about a satisfactory conclusion to all investigations these practices must be followed:

- It is not the responsibility of the staff, volunteers and associate workers to investigate suspected abuse. This must be left to the designated Child Protection Officer or his/her Assistant.
- Discussion/investigation must be dealt with **in confidence**.
- Staff must not promise children or young people that their discussion will be kept secret. Equally, staff must not ask leading questions. It is more acceptable to say "Tell me what happened" rather than "Did they do xxx to you? The key task at this stage is to listen to the child or young person, without interrupting as they recall significant events.
- Write notes as soon as you can after speaking with the child or young person. Record as much as you can quote the child's or young person's own words. Ensure these notes are dated, the time recorded and the notes are signed
- All written notes must be on the appropriate forms and passed on to the Child Protection Officer and will be kept securely in the office.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

Introduction

Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education take seriously their responsibility to protect and promote the welfare of children and young people and ensure that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer is dealt with quickly, fairly and consistently through thorough investigation providing effective protection for the child or young person and at the same time supporting, without prejudice, the person who is the subject of the allegation. It is important that

staff, children and parents/carers are able to raise concerns and are listened to and taken seriously.

An allegation of abuse in this instance is when a member of staff or volunteer (or associate worker) has:

- behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child, or children, in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education will, in all cases, follow the guidance set out in the Government guide, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children ('

Initial Allegation

Any allegation of abuse by an individual to a child or young person must be reported to the Designated Manager for Child Protection in the first instance. If the allegation is against the Designated Manager for Child Protection then it must be reported to the Chair of the Management Board. Should the initial allegation first be made to any other member of staff or volunteer then that person must either request the person raising the allegation to report it to the Designated Manager for Child Protection or Chair of Management Board, as appropriate, or if that is not possible to pass the details of the allegation to the appropriate person immediately.

Initial Consideration

If the allegation meets any of the criteria above, the Designated Manager for Child Protection or Chair of the Management Board, as appropriate, will report it to the local authority designated officer within one working day and provide any further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The Designated Manager for Child Protection should not investigate the allegation at this stage. The discussion will also consider whether there is evidence or information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the local authority designated officer will immediately refer the case to children's social care and ask for a strategy discussion in accordance with *Working Together to Safeguard Children* to be convened straight away. In these circumstances the strategy discussion should include the local authority designated officer and the Designated Manager for Child Protection. At this point a decision will be made as to when and how the child's parent/carer will be informed (if they do not already know of the allegation).

If there is not cause to suspect that "significant harm" is an issue, but a criminal offence might have been committed, the local authority designated officer should immediately inform the police and convene a similar discussion to decide whether a police investigation is needed. That discussion will also involve the school and any other agencies involved with the child.

Action following initial consideration

Where the initial consideration decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence it will be for the Designated Manager for Child Protection to deal with it. In such cases, if the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Designated Manager for

Child Protection should institute appropriate action within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days.

The Designated Manager for Child Protection must not automatically suspend such an individual without careful thought. Suspension should be considered in any case where:

- a child is at risk of significant harm
- the allegation warrants investigation by the police
- the allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

The Designated Manager for Child Protection must also consider whether the result that would be achieved by suspension could be obtained by alternative arrangements.

Where further investigation is required to inform consideration of disciplinary action the Designated Manager for Child Protection should discuss who will undertake the role of investigating officer with the local authority designated officer. The investigating officer should aim to provide a report to the Designated Manager for Child Protection within 10 working days.

On receipt of the report of the disciplinary investigation, the Designated Manager for Child Protection and Chair of Management Board should consult the local authority designated officer, and decide, within two working days, whether a disciplinary hearing is needed. If a hearing is needed it should be held within 15 working days.

In any case in which children's social care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children are in need of protection, the Designated Manager for Child Protection and Chair of Governors should take account of any relevant information obtained in the course of those enquiries when considering disciplinary action.

The local authority designated officer should continue to liaise with the Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education to monitor progress of the case and provide advice or support when required or requested.

At all times the individual against whom the allegation has been made should be kept informed of progress and time constraints.

Case subject to police investigation

If the police and/or CPS decide not to charge the individual with an offence, or decide to administer a caution, or the person is acquitted by a Court, the police should wherever possible aim to pass all information they have which may be relevant to a disciplinary case to the Designated Manager for Child Protection. In those circumstances the Designated Manager for Child Protection and the local authority designated officer should proceed as described above.

If the individual is convicted of an offence, the police should inform the Designated Manager for Child Protection so that appropriate action can be taken.

In any case in which children's social care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children are in need of protection, any information obtained in the course of those enquiries which is relevant to a disciplinary case should also be passed to the Designated Manager for Child Protection or Chair of Governors, as appropriate.

If on conclusion of the case Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education dismisses the employee, or the employee decides to terminate their contract, Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education should consult the local authority designated officer about whether a referral to the, or other regulatory body, is required. If a referral is appropriate the report should be made within one month.

Confidentiality

The Management Board will ensure that every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Administration and supervision of this Policy

- Responsibility for the administration and maintenance of this policy currently rests with the Management Board.
- This responsibility for the operational aspects of the Child Protection Policy rests with the Child Protection Manager His or her role within this policy is to assume overall responsibility and to take the lead should there, for example, be any complaint or investigation required.
- Initial support and advice for any member of staff should be obtained from their immediate superior. Voluntary and Associate Educators obtain this from the appropriate nominated member of staff.

The role and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person may be subject to abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, and referred where necessary to ensure the issues are properly addressed.
- The Chair of the Management Board will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. These will be kept in a secure place

Managing Allegations

When worrying changes are observed in a child's or young person's behaviour, physical condition or appearance staff will:

Stage 1

- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously; ;
- Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others;
- Notify the organisation's Named Person for Child Protection.
- Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure;
- The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the pro-forma and ensure it is signed and dated.
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely;

Stage 2

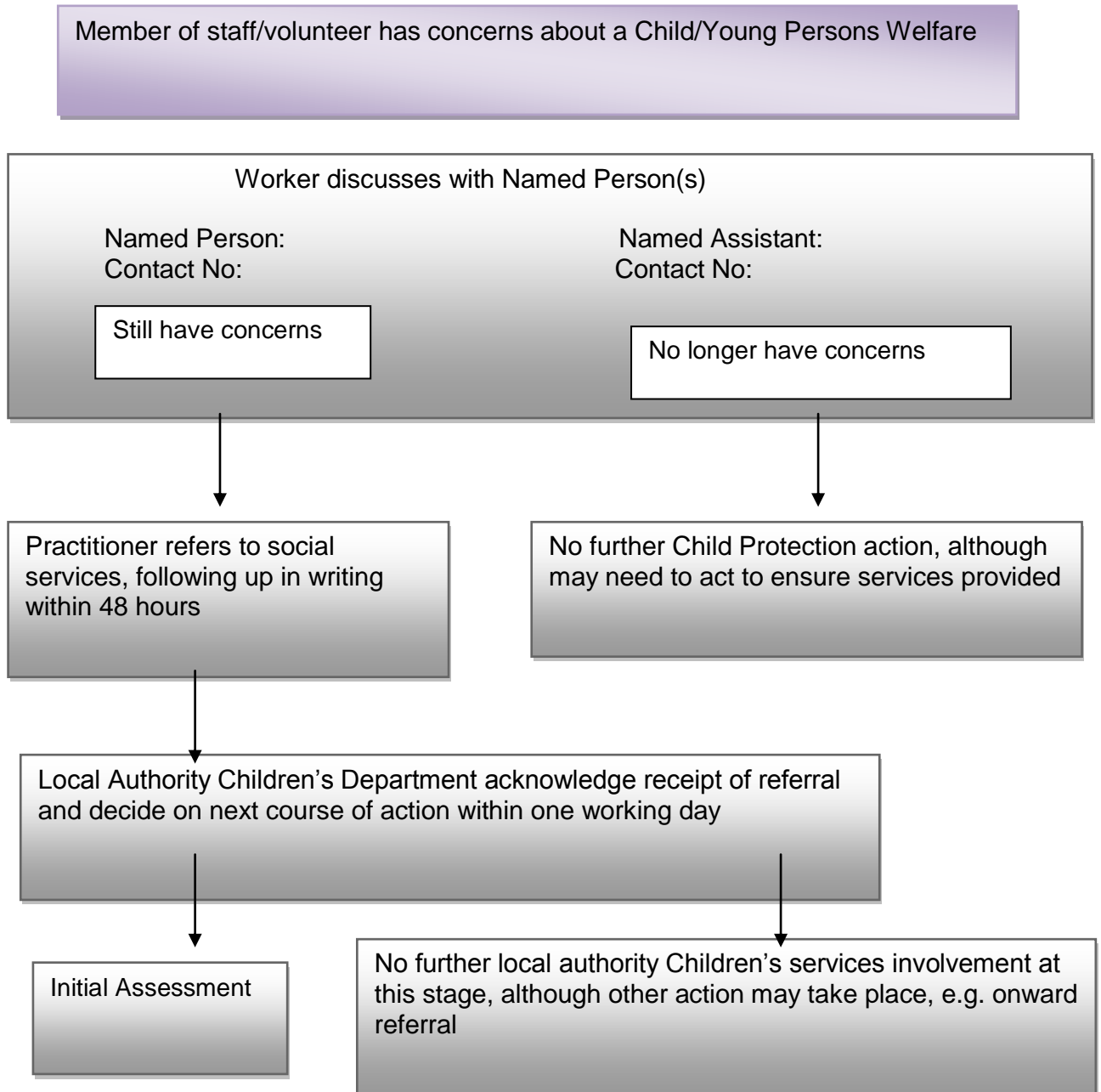
- The Named person(s) will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the Named Person will contact the police and/or Lewisham Social Services.
- The named person can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern via the relevant duty team for Lewisham Social Services e or via the NSPCC National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Managing Allegations made against a member of Staff or Volunteer

Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse against workers and investigates using the following procedures below.

Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education will ensure that any allegations made against members or a member of staff will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The worker must ensure that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.
- The named person for child protection should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving the named person, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person.
- (Note: this could be a committee member, director or anyone within the organisation that is in a senior position within the organisation and believed to be independent of the allegations being made).
- The named person should contact Social Services for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the police should be contacted for discussion.
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social services.
- Regardless of whether a police and/or social services investigation follows, Lite-Waves Therapeutic Education will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident.



Please note that if Social Services do not become involved following your referral but you remain concerned and feel that their involvement is necessary, you should escalate your action to further communicate your concerns to the Social Services Department.

Name: _____

Position: _____

Signature:

Date:

Appendix A

SAFEGUARDING RECORD

CHILD'S NAME:	Year group:
Name of adult initiating record:	Date:

INCIDENT – record what has been observed and/or said (facts only). Give details of circumstances and how raised.

Record here any personal opinions about the incident:

SAFEGUARDING ON-GOING INCIDENT RECORD

CHILD'S NAME:	DoB:
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Date	Incident Reported/Observed	Is this: FACT/ SUSPICION/ OPINION	Reported by	Action taken

