FACILITATOR GUIDE:
PROBLEM SOLVING TEAM BUILDING APPROACH

1

PURPOSE OF THE SESSION

To collaboratively analyse a safeguarding concern, consider multiple explanations, and agree on a clear, proportionate plan of action that improves outcomes for the child.

2

FACILITATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Maintain a child-centred focus and keep discussions factual, structured, and respectful, reducing bias and avoiding “single story” thinking. Encourage contributions from all professionals, link decisions to evidence and safeguarding thresholds, and ensure key points and actions are recorded.

3

HEADLINE THE PROBLEM & BACKGROUND

Prompt: “What exactly do we know? What has been seen, heard, or reported?”
Facilitator Tips: Keep to facts, not interpretations, separate impact from intention

4

IDEA GENERATION

Prompt: “What are the possible explanations or actions we could take?”
Facilitator Tips: No judgment at this stage, encourage breadth: pastoral, curriculum, familial, health, relational, digital, use sticky notes or an open board

5

IDEA SELECTION

Prompt: “Which ideas feel most relevant, proportionate and actionable?”
Facilitator Tips: Highlight ideas that keep the child safest, aim for 3–5 focused options

6

ANALYSE BENEFITS & CONCERNS

Prompt: “What could this idea achieve, what could get in the way?”
Facilitator Tips: Encourage realism, acknowledge potential unintended consequences, bring in specialist views (SENCO, counsellor, attendance lead)

7

WORK ANY CRITICAL CONCERNS

Prompt: “How can we reduce or remove these concerns? Is the idea still viable?”
Facilitator Tips: Adapt ideas rather than discard when possible, ensure safety and proportionality

6

ACTION PLANNING

Prompt: “What exactly will we do next?”
Facilitator Tips: Include specific actions, named leads, timescales, success indicators, review dates (always!), use a template for consistency
Close the session: Summarise decisions and actions clearly, re-emphasise accountability and follow-up, ensure safeguarding recording systems are updated, confirm next review date