

Education Selection Box

Child Protection and Safeguarding Children (level 2) Policy

Throughout our courses and classes we monitor the students, reporting any concerns at weekly course meetings, ensuring their safeguarding.

We are therefore alert to signs of abuse and neglect and follow procedures to ensure that the students receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures apply to all staff and volunteers and are consistent with those of Coventry City Council's safeguarding procedures. They can be found at

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/150/work_related_learning/3673/training_providers/4.

Where relevant, incident reports regarding safeguarding can be found at

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/150/work_related_learning/3673/training_providers/3.

Further information about what should be included on forms is below.

We follow the NSPCC recommended guidelines for recognising and reporting abuse which can be found at

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/recognising-and-responding-to-abuse>.

All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral will be made to both the relevant school and the MASH directly.

Anybody can make a referral. Contact will be maintained with all parties to ensure that if the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the matter is escalated.

Types of abuse and signs

Physical abuse of a child is when someone deliberately causes them physical harm.

The common signs of physical abuse are bruising, cuts and scratches, particularly on parts of the body that aren't usually injured. But any injury that comes without a reasonable or feasible explanation is a cause for concern - such as bite marks, burns, scalds and broken bones; or head injuries for babies, which could be caused by dropping or shaking them. Physical abuse also includes poisoning, drowning, suffocating, giving a child alcohol or illegal drugs, or deliberately fabricating or inducing illness in a child. But you won't always see physical evidence - sometimes there are less obvious signs such as a child cowering or shying away from touch, being reluctant to change for PE lessons or seeming afraid or uncomfortable to go home. They may make up, or change, stories about how they sustained an injury, or try to cover it up with clothing. If you're concerned a child may be the victim of physical abuse, you need to take their age and stage of development into consideration. For example, a baby who can't sit up on their own yet shouldn't have any bruises on their body, but a child in primary school will often have bruises on their shins or grazes on their knees from mucking around.

If you're concerned, you may notice that a child has been admitted to several different A&E departments

or GP drop in centres - this can be a tactic used by an abuser to cover up how often a child needs medical help. Repeated or severe abuse can cause long term damage to a child's physical health - it can result in brain damage, eye damage, loss of hearing and some children even die as a result of severe physical abuse. Even if the physical implications aren't permanent, the emotional damage will last long after the bruises have healed.

Based on what we've just discussed, which one of these is not physical abuse:

- Inducing illness in a child
- Suffocating a child, or
- Threatening to hit a child

Emotional abuse - warning signs

Emotional abuse plays a part in all abuse situations, but it can exist on its own. It can include repeatedly:

- Yelling
- Swearing
- Threatening
- Bullying/cyber bullying
- Shaming
- Blaming
- Corrupting
- Exploiting
- Deliberately silencing a child
- Humiliating/making fun of a child/making sarcastic comments
- Ignoring/withholding affection
- Rejecting or abandoning a child
- Not giving a child the opportunity to express themselves or their views
- Imposing inappropriate expectations
- Overprotecting/limiting exploration and learning
- Preventing normal social interaction
- Threatening to harm or kill a child, loved ones or pets
- Forcing a child to watch violent acts
- Putting a child in dangerous situations
- Saying things that makes a child feel unloved, inadequate or like a mistake

Emotional abuse is when a child's emotional needs are not being met. This can include being repeatedly ignored, or subjected to unkind or harsh words, criticism, humiliation, yelling, swearing, rejection or abandonment. Imposing inappropriate expectations on a child, over-protecting them, withholding affection from them or even preventing them from normal social interaction are also forms of emotional abuse. And there's more - including not letting a child express their views, deliberately silencing them, threatening them, a loved one or a pet with violence, and even forcing a child to witness abuse, such as domestic violence. Emotional abuse plays a part in all abuse situations, but it can exist on its own, It's anything that makes a child feel unsafe, unloved, inadequate or a mistake. It causes deep emotional distress and it can often lead to mental health problems for the child, now and later in life. Corrupting a child by encouraging them to behave in an antisocial way, or giving them alcohol or drugs is also emotional abuse. Would you say this is true?

Even though it can be unintentional, neglect is a form of child abuse. Whether it's deliberate or not, neglect is when a parent or carer continually fails to meet a child's basic needs, including food, drink, warmth, shelter, personal hygiene and social contact. A child who is neglected is likely to suffer with poor physical health as a result, and their academic and social development is very likely to be delayed or stunted. Neglect takes many forms - in addition to not supplying any, or enough, food, water and warmth, it can include a mother drinking heavily or taking drugs during pregnancy, a parent throwing a child out of the house, not protecting a child from physical or emotional harm, or not ensuring they get medical help when they need it. Even though everyone may be under one roof with no intention of causing harm, parents or carers may be unable to care for a child properly. This could be due to their own physical or mental ill health, a breakdown or struggles in a domestic relationship, domestic abuse,

or dependence on alcohol or drugs. If a child is a carer for a loved one, this can often mean their own needs are neglected.

Warning signs to look out for in a neglected child include the child:

- Often being hungry
- Not growing as they should or being unusually thin
- Wearing unwashed, badly fitting, or dirty clothes and shoes
- Having poor personal hygiene, which usually involves smelling bad and having unwashed hair

It's not uncommon for neglected children to frequently arrive late or forget their PE kit, or to be responsible for getting themselves to and from school at a young age. Neglected children may be left at home alone, or attempt to run away from home. You may notice that they are disruptive and attention seeking in class, but some children can become increasingly withdrawn as a result of neglect.

Domestic abuse is when someone causes psychological, emotional, physical, sexual or financial harm

- or a mixture of these - in an attempt to control or bully a current or former sexual partner.

Both men and women can be the victim or the abuser. Domestic abuse can show up in heterosexual relationships, same sex relationships, marriages and teenage relationships. It can be physical violence, abuse over social media, or it can even be gang related.

Teenagers are also at risk with 'sexting'.

Sending sexual or explicit images or texts to someone can be misused later as a form of revenge or

blackmail if the relationship ends. With domestic abuse, it's not just the direct victim that suffers - anyone else who witnesses this type of abuse is victimised too - which is why children suffer if they live with adults who are victims of domestic abuse. How do you think a child's wellbeing is affected by living with, or regularly witnessing domestic abuse or violence? If a child witnesses domestic abuse of a loved one it can create lasting trauma for them, and it can slow down their emotional, physical, social and academic development. In cases such as these, a child who witnesses a loved one being abused will often feel angry, helpless, and even responsible for it. Research tells us that if adults are aggressive towards their partners at home, there's a high chance that the aggression will turn to any children present in the home as well.

Research also tells us that the stress of experiencing violence at home can impair the brain development of babies.

Sexual abuse is when a child is enticed or forced into taking part in sexual activities, whether they are aware of what is happening or not. This type of abuse can involve violence, but this isn't always the case. Sexual abuse can include:

- Grooming a child for abuse - whether it's in person, over the phone or on the internet
- Encouraging a child to behave in a sexually inappropriate way
- Non-contact activities - such as having a child look at sexual images, videos, or watching sexual activities in person
- Non-penetrative activities - such as kissing, touching and masturbation
- And penetration, including oral sex and rape

It's important to consider that sex offenders can be men, women and even other children - of any age, ethnicity, religion or cultural background. It can also exist within teenage relationships. It's often someone close to the child, such as a family member or a family friend. But it can be anyone - even a stranger.

Sex offenders can often chose jobs or volunteer for roles that allow them to get close to children and win their trust. They can also pretend to be another child in chat rooms or on social media. As well as the common warning signs of abuse, children who suffer from sexual abuse may also:

- Have inappropriate sexual knowledge, or show inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age
- Experience repeated urinary infections
- Have frequent and unexplained stomach pains
- Shy away from touch or affection, or even be overly affectionate or clingy

And older children may have unprotected sex with different partners or they may turn to alcohol or drugs as a way of coping.

Child Sexual Exploitation, often referred to as CSE, is a type of sexual abuse.

It's also a type of emotional abuse, and often includes physical abuse too. CSE is taking place if a person - or several people - deliberately target and coerce, entice or pressure a young person into sexual activities. It's used to exercise power and control over those who are young and inexperienced. Sometimes, a young person can be involved in what they consider to be a consensual relationship

- but their partner may be exploiting them.

CSE is not as common as the other types of abuse we've looked at so far, but it does happen and really, it's a hidden crime. Child sexual exploitation can happen in person, online, or over the phone. The perpetrator could start out as a stranger who befriends a young person, but it's more likely to be a member of a child's family, a family friend, or a friend of a friend. Victims of CSE are often coerced into sexual activities through the means of gifts - such as money, clothes, alcohol, drugs; or even more basic needs such as affection, food and accommodation. It's commonly someone who is at least a few years older than the child, if not considerably older - and as I just mentioned - it could be someone who the child sees as their boyfriend or girlfriend. It can also be gang related.

Why do you think CSE is difficult to spot?

- Because this is an uncommon type of abuse, or
- Because the child may think they are in a caring, consensual relationship

A young person can easily get caught up in all the attention, which is why they can get tangled up in this type of abuse before they even realise the truth behind the perpetrators actions, and if they realise what's going on, they may already be quite attached to the perpetrator. This is why the warning signs of CSE can be difficult to spot - but it's worth considering if you see the common warning signs of abuse, particularly the warning signs of sexual abuse. But with teenagers, these things can be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour - such as mood swings, experimenting with appearance or interests, entering into sexual relationships and varying who they hang out with inside and outside of school. But if a child's behaviour concerns you and you notice they have an older partner, several relationships, run ins with the police, they're secretive with their phone, they're missing school, or even turning up with new jewellery, new clothes, a new phone... that kind of thing - CSE is worth considering.

"Domineering" definition

"Domineering" means to use power, influence and/or authority over others to such an extent that they cannot communicate or act freely.

County Lines (drug running)

County Lines is where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries (although not exclusively), usually by children or vulnerable people who are coerced into it by gangs. The 'County Line' is the mobile phone line used to take the orders of drugs. Importing areas (areas where the drugs are taken to) are reporting increased levels of violence and weapons-related crimes as a result of this trend. -*National Crime Agency*.

For more information on the warning signs associated with child exploitation and drug running, and what to do if you want to report any concerns, please see

- <https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/drug-trafficking/county-lines>

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/drug-trafficking/county-lines>

iHASCO's Modern Slavery Training

<https://www.ihasco.co.uk/courses/detail/modern-slavery-training>

Child trafficking and modern slavery are other forms of child abuse. Child trafficking is when children - boys and girls - are tricked, recruited or abducted by traffickers and either sold or forced into slavery,

after being moved or transported from their home. This can mean going abroad, across the country, or even just a few streets away. Many children who come from poor families or poorer parts of the world

can be illegally transported to the UK by traffickers. Many children are taken against their will, but some travel voluntarily, because the child and their family are under the illusion that they will be doing honest work to send money home to their families. Or they may be in very poor circumstances right now and take up the offer of work because they need food, shelter and warmth - or they simply feel like they have no other choice. No matter how the situation comes about, it's impossible for the child to know how bad the situation is until they are in the perpetrator's hands. Children can be trafficked for child sexual exploitation, forced marriage or benefit fraud. They can be forced into work - commonly in factories, agriculture, or domestic servitude like cleaning, cooking, or childcare. Or they can be coerced into criminal exploitation - maybe to work on cannabis farms, transporting drugs, or pickpocketing and stealing. Once they are under someone else's control, children in slavery become dependant on the perpetrator for their basic needs. Their loved ones' safety is usually threatened, and depending on the particular circumstances, they can suffer all kinds of neglect, as well as physical, emotional and sexual abuse to keep them quiet, compliant and often too afraid to run away or ask for help. Any of the common warning signs of abuse could be present with this type of abuse, including signs of neglect.

You may also notice a child having an unexplained fear of authorities,

always being accompanied by a domineering adult, avoiding healthcare services, or a child living with adults who can't provide a consistent or coherent history of the child's life to date.

Bullying is when someone's negative behaviour is repeatedly harmful to someone else. Children who have disabilities, are noticeably intelligent or talented, socially awkward, or those that have suffered from abuse or neglect at home are at a higher risk.

- Bullying can be physical - someone may frequently push, kick, hit, spit on, or steal from a child.
- It can be verbal, like name-calling, gossiping, making threats,

picking on someone's disability, or making sexual, racist or homophobic comments.

- Bullying can also include threatening texts, abusive or hoax phone calls.
- It can mean controlling someone, manipulating someone, or excluding someone from a group or activity
- it's anything that makes a child feel threatened, humiliated, isolated, lonely or unhappy.

Bullying is a form of emotional abuse - it can really distress a child and damage their mental health, their physical health, and their social and academic development. It can lead to missed school days, withdrawal from socialising, anxiety, depression, self-harming, eating disorders, PTSD and even suicide for many children. As I'm sure you're aware, it can be common at school as it often happens among peers, so school staff are in a good position to spot it and stop it.

Bullying can also be online - cyber bullying is the same thing - but it happens on forums, in chat rooms, on social media and in messaging apps rather than in person. It can really frighten a child and make them feel like they can't escape. Over a third of young people in the UK have been victims of cyber bullying. It's

crucial to monitor - or at least to be aware - of what a child sees, shares and is exposed to online; because young people are very vulnerable to bullying, harassment, sexual predators and radicalisation. The problem is, cyber bullying can be more of a challenge to spot when you're not actually able to witness it happening. However, there is some useful guidance out there for handling this type of bullying - [see our Additional Resources for more information.](#)

Grooming is a form of child abuse and online grooming is a very real risk for children as most of them are on chatrooms, social media and use online gaming from an early age. Selfies and video chats have become a normal part of childhood, and as children get a little older, sexting and sexual relationships are often the norm too. Which is why child sex offenders will often pose as a child on these different online platforms or apps, and talk to a child frequently, sometimes for a long time, to gain their trust and affection. They can encourage a child to send sexual images or have sexual conversations, and they may arrange to meet the child in person after a period of time. Any of these things are used for the abusers gratification, and even blackmail to prevent the child from telling anyone what's going on.

Online grooming can be the beginning of sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, child trafficking or radicalisation. Because mobile phones are personal devices, and teenagers especially will spend a lot of time in their room alone or out with friends, they're vulnerable to online grooming and it can be difficult for anyone else to keep them safe from this type of abuse. But the warning signs are a child spending an unusual amount of time on their phone or other devices, being secretive with their phone or not allowing anyone to see the screen, withdrawing from their family and friends, having a relationship with someone older, talking with their friends about an online fling or relationship, or a child turning up with new (and possibly) expensive gifts and clothing. Children can end up showing signs of isolation, distress or upset if they're being exploited, threatened or 'obviously' abused, but they often don't realise abuse is taking place at all and simply think they're in a relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend. [Groomers can be men or women, of any age - and they target both boys and girls.](#)

Upskirting

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-law-comes-into-force>

Upskirting is when someone takes a photo or video underneath someone else's clothing, without that person's knowledge or consent. It is a criminal offence. The culprits can be men, women or children. Click the link for further details.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-law-comes-into-force>

Radicalisation is the process that someone goes through that results in them supporting terrorism, or extremist ideologies that are connected to political, social or religious beliefs. Children and young people are vulnerable to radicalisation, because radicalisers target people who are impressionable, lonely, those who crave excitement, are looking for escape, or are searching for meaning and a sense of belonging.

Children who are bullied, have few friends or are suffering from poor mental health or some kind of abuse are vulnerable. And children with autism are especially vulnerable. The warning signs aren't always easy to spot, but again, recognising changes in a child's behaviour and keeping an eye out for the common signs of abuse is important, such as a child lashing out, experiencing mood swings, or becoming increasingly withdrawn or lonely. There are a few things however, that can be warning signs of radicalisation

specifically... Including a child expressing intolerance of others and their beliefs, showing support for extremist groups, reading certain material that concerns you, using language and phrases that sound scripted, and writing or doodling disturbing images and symbols.

It's important to remember that radicalisation can come from within the family home or outside of it -

possibly through social media or new friends. It can start from a very early age - children as young as 5 or 6 are at risk if they grow up in this kind of environment. It's similar to grooming, in that a lot of this can take place online by a radicaliser befriending a young person in a chat room or on social media.

CALEB (Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief)

<http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/calfb/>

Please see this webpage if you would like further information.

<http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/calfb/>

Babies

With babies, shaking them is abuse. It commonly causes non-accidental head injuries, known as NAHI, which includes fractures, seizures, internal bleeding, eye damage, hearing and speech impairments, personality changes, brain damage, and even death.

Smacking Children - UK laws

It is illegal for a teacher or registered childminder to smack a child in the United Kingdom.

England and Northern Ireland

If the smack is considered "reasonable chastisement" or "reasonable punishment" in court, it is legal for a parent to smack their own child. But it is illegal if the smack leaves a mark or involves the child being hit by an object such as a belt or cane.

Scotland

It is currently legal for a parent to smack their child if it is considered "reasonable punishment", but shaking/striking a child's head/using an implement are considered "unreasonable", and therefore illegal. It has been confirmed that The Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Bill will ban smacking and physical punishment entirely when it comes into effect.

Wales

The Welsh government have recently published a bill that removes "reasonable punishment" as a defence. If the bill is passed by the National Assembly, it will mean that smacking and all forms of physical punishment against children in Wales will become illegal.

AFRUCA - witchcraft abuse

<https://www.afruca.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/What-is-Witchcraft-Booklet-2017.pdf>

Faith abuse is when a belief in supernatural phenomenon, such as witchcraft, the devil or spirit possession becomes the justification for a person, or even a family or community of people, to cause harm to others in order to control them, punish them, protect other people, or even in an attempt to protect the person they are abusing. Faith abuse can be present in any and all faiths, communities and cultures, nobody is exempt. It's a rare form of abuse that involves a child becoming a victim of physical,

emotional, and sometimes, sexual, abuse. The tricky thing here is that, sometimes, perpetrators mistakenly think they are saving a child; for example, physical torture may be seen as a way of exorcising an evil spirit from a child's body. Someone may have an unreasonable - albeit genuine - fear that a child is a threat to the lives of their siblings, parents, or other family members.

In these cases, it's common for the family to be among the perpetrators, but it can also be the influence or orders from religious or community leaders. Scapegoating can also be a factor in faith abuse. The most vulnerable people in a group offer the least ability to resist being scapegoated, so children are inherently vulnerable.

But if a child has special qualities or talents, or even behavioural difficulties or disabilities, they are more likely to be seen as 'supernatural' or 'possessed' and therefore become an easy target for blame. A child may be the scapegoat for a parent losing their job, a divorce, a sibling breaking their arm, a grandparent passing away, a pot of water boiling over - you name it. Faith abuse can also be a way of threatening children into behaving in a certain way, or to coerce them into slavery or servitude. And at its most severe, faith abuse can involve a child's life being sacrificed in order for the living to reap supernatural benefits.

So, what do you need to look out for? You need to keep an eye out for the common signs of abuse, as any of them could be present with faith abuse, but your knowledge of the family's beliefs and behaviours could be a warning sign too, especially if they have been identified as witches or have a complex family structure - such as a child living with a distant relative, step-relatives, or in a foster family - these raise the risks. With a family's belief system in mind, if a child is epileptic, autistic, or even just left-handed, they are at an increased risk. You may also notice a child speak about the supernatural with either a very keen interest or with a lot of concern. If you suspect faith abuse, you need to bear in mind

that a child may share the same beliefs as their family - they may also think they are supernatural or possessed by an evil spirit, and this could be terrifying for them, or even be used as an excuse for them to behave badly at school. Emotional intelligence plays an important part here - you need to check that you're not reading too much into something that isn't there, but equally, if you're genuinely concerned you need to respond. If you feel out of your depth, talk to your DSL and make good use of specialist organisations that are designed to deal with this type of abuse. [You can see our Additional Resources for more information.](#)

iHASCO - FGM Awareness & Prevention Training

<https://www.ihasco.co.uk/courses/detail/fgm-awareness-training>

The 4 types of FGM:

Clitoridectomy - which means removing part or all of the clitoris, or the hood of skin that covers it.

Excision - which means removing part or all of the clitoris and the labia minora (the inner lips of the genitals). This may also include removing the labia majora (the outer lips).

Infibulation - which means cutting and sewing together the inner or outer labia, leaving only a small

opening near the vagina.

Other- which is the category for all other forms of non-medical procedures that cut, pierce, pull, stretch, scrape, burn or injure the female genital area.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is commonly called 'cutting' or 'female circumcision' in practising communities, or a translation of these words in other languages. It means injuring, changing, or removing part or all of the external parts of the female genitals - for nonmedical reasons. There are four different types, which you can read about in our Additional Resources.

This practice is deeply embedded in certain cultures and it's a social norm in certain communities throughout the Middle East, Asia and some African countries. It's often not seen as abuse at all, but rather a rite of passage, a form of 'purification' or a 'ceremony' for girls to enter into womanhood. Female Genital Mutilation has now spread across the world and it's practised in the UK too. The procedure is usually carried out in a non-sterile environment and often without anaesthetic, by older women in the community - perhaps an aunt or grandmother.

It's very dangerous and results in many physical and emotional health problems for the victims throughout their lives. Some girls and women have even died from it. The victims can be babies, young girls, older girls, young women, pregnant women, or women who are even older - before or shortly after marriage. A girl is at a higher risk if she's from a community that is known to practise FGM or if any of her female relatives have already undergone the procedure. If a girl is from a practising community and starts talking about taking a long holiday abroad or starts getting excited about a celebration of womanhood, or a female relative visiting from overseas

- it doesn't necessarily mean that anything untoward is happening at all, but it needs to be considered.

A girl showing any of the common signs of abuse in addition to spending a lot of time in the toilet, having cysts or abscesses, getting repeated urinary infections, experiencing pain, bleeding, menstrual problems, or showing signs of shock, deep distress or PTSD could also have suffered from FGM.

Breast Flattening

<http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/breast-flattening/>

<http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/breast-flattening/>

Some girls are victims of breast ironing, or breast flattening, from the beginning of puberty. In practising households, this is done by female relatives by ironing, massaging, flattening or pounding down the breasts over a period of time in order for the breasts to disappear or stop them from developing. This can be carried out for years. Some families will heat objects like large stones, a hammer or a spatula over hot coals and then use them to compress the breast tissue. Other families may use an elastic belt or binder to press the breasts and stop them from growing. Much like FGM, breast ironing is more common in certain African countries, but it can happen in any country. And, much like FGM, the people that practise this on the young girls in their family often think they are doing right by the child. Practising families often think it can prevent unwanted male attention, pregnancy and rape. Some think it enables a girl to continue her education or that it prevents the girl from becoming sexual, and therefore prevents her from dishonouring the family. Just like any other form of abuse, breast ironing impacts a girl's emotional and psychological wellbeing, it can affect her ability to form trusting relationships and it can be a trigger for a number of mental and physical health

problems. There are a few red flags that suggest this abuse may be taking place, including: A girl being part of a family that considers breast ironing to be a part of their cultural identity, or part of family that are not well integrated within UK society; a girl who's female relatives have already been victims of breast ironing; a girl who is embarrassed about her body;

or a girl who has been withdrawn from sex education classes at her family's request. The physical warning signs can vary because the implements, type of force and aftercare can vary a lot. But some signs include, abscesses, cysts, itching, infection, tissue damage, discharge of milk, severe fever, dissymmetry of the breasts, or even the complete disappearance of one or both breasts.

It's true. Children who are victims of CSE suffer from sexual and emotional abuse - but it can also involve physical violence.

Common signs of abuse

There are some common warning signs that cover pretty much all types of child abuse and neglect for most age groups. If you recognise any of these signs in a child, regardless of whether you suspect a particular type of abuse or not, you need to respond appropriately. These are:

- Extreme mood swings, aggression, and violence
- Self-harming
- Wetting the bed
- Obsessive behaviour
- Going missing from home, care or school or having poor attendance
- Poor relationships with family
- Becoming withdrawn, isolated or having few friends
- Being underdeveloped - emotionally, physically, socially or academically
- Having poor mental health, including phobias, anxiety, depression or eating disorders
- Disturbed sleep or nightmares
- Being reluctant to get changed for PE or to visit the school nurse
- Being secretive and reluctant to share information

Or even being very clingy, attention seeking and needing to please. And teenage victims may alter their appearance, have run ins with the police, take unsafe risks or turn to alcohol or drugs as a way of coping. The abuse may have stopped but a child may still show these signs - as consequences of abuse can last long after the abuse has ended, and these children need support too. One thing to consider, however, is that if a child has been abused from a very young age they won't necessarily know any different or even realise they are being mistreated. Their behaviour, appearance and home life are likely to give off red flags anyway, but a child may think it's normal because it's all they've ever known.

What to do

Recognising that a child is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, can be very upsetting and it may be tempting to avoid the issue or convince yourself you're worrying over nothing. But if your gut, your professional judgement or your common sense is telling you something isn't right, it's time to respond - and quickly.

This goes for any concerning changes in a child's behaviour, or any warning signs of abuse, even if you're unsure about what type of abuse it may be, or if a child comes to you and tells you they are being harmed in some way. Respond is the second of the 4 Rs of child protection, and it means starting the safeguarding procedure that your organisation has in place. Depending on the situation and the level of risk, this may involve talking to the child. This will be the case if the child tells you they are being abused - which is called making a disclosure. On the other hand, a child may not tell you anything.

Either way, you'll need to make a written record and report your concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. You may even need to report it to the police if it's urgent. But in this third section, we take a look at what to do if a child makes a disclosure and you need to respond directly to them.

If you're concerned, parents or carers could explain the injuries or troubles that the child is sharing with you. But if you notice that the explanation is changing or you get the feeling the child is just echoing what the adult would say, or has said, this is a warning sign that it may not be best to speak to the parents or carers straight away. You'll need to report to your DSL anyway - so make sure you tell them about this, and they will decide if getting the family involved is a good idea or not.

The moment a child makes a disclosure, you'll probably feel uncomfortable, upset, angry, or even shocked or out of your depth - all of these feelings are natural. But first and foremost, sit down with the child in a quiet place and stay calm on the outside, even if you don't feel it on the inside. This will help to calm the child and help them to open up.

Secondly, encourage the child to talk freely. The longer they are talking, the better. So do your best not to interrupt them, you can just make a few reassuring noises here and there so they know you're listening. If they stop talking but you want more information, you can ask them direct questions like "when did that happen?" and "what happened next?" This encourages the child to be as calm and factual as possible, which is why it's best to avoid leading questions such as "how did that make you feel?" because they're likely to get more upset when they answer.

Thirdly, listen very carefully. Pay attention to the exact words the child is using, how they are behaving, and their body language. This is crucial, because you'll need to make a record of this conversation afterwards, and these details are important. And finally, respond to the child in an age-appropriate, sensitive and non-judgemental way - this means showing no judgement towards the alleged abuser in front of the child. It's very important to be sensitive to the child's age, character and the circumstances. You may need to consider what you already know about their home life or family situation, their mental health, physical health, and any other existing vulnerabilities that could be impacting them, but it's still important to avoid making assumptions. It can be useful to repeat the child's words back to them to check you've understood everything they've said. Offer them reassurance and thank them for having the courage to talk with you, and do your best to use simple, unemotional language. Be careful to never make a promise you can't keep, and never promise confidentiality, even if the child asks you to keep the conversation a secret. You need to be honest - by

saying something like “so I can keep you safe, I need to pass this information onto someone who is trained to help.” At the end of the conversation, make sure the child has someone appropriate to support them bear in mind, this may not be their parent or carer - depending on the circumstances. You may also need to take a moment for yourself after a conversation like this. It can be very upsetting to process. Once you’ve dealt with anything urgent that the child needs, you may need to take a short break, get some fresh air, or get support from a colleague or a Mental Health First Aider if your organisation has one.

You need to report the matter to your DSL.

You then need to make a detailed and accurate written record about what has happened. You must make a record even if the matter isn’t pursued on this occasion.

Whether you’ve spoken to the child directly or not, responding to suspected, alleged or known abuse means taking these two steps. The order in which you report or record the concern is down to how urgent the matter is, and what your safeguarding procedure asks you to do. Depending on the requirements of your organisation, this may mean the report is an email, a living online document, a handwritten one, or an entry onto an internal electronic system. The key principles of a written record are: keep it clear, accurate and up-to-date. In this section, we’ll take you through what to do.

Before we go into the specifics of what to record, we're going to cover how to approach your record. A written record should be made as soon as possible after an event or conversation, so the facts and details are still fresh in your mind. A record should clearly separate fact from opinion. You need to record exactly what you’ve seen, heard and done - rather than allowing your feelings or interpretation of events to cloud your writing. A record should use simple, concise and unemotional language.

Information sharing is a crucial part of successfully safeguarding a child, but a record should still only be shared with relevant individuals and agencies. Child protection records should always be shared with the parents or carers unless they themselves are the cause for concern. A record should be treated as the important document that it is - it’s potential evidence of abuse and this document could be used in a legal case if the matter goes to court Now, we move onto what to record....

A written record needs to include the name, age, gender, ethnicity, and any physical or mental health conditions the child has. It also needs to include your name and details. You then need to note down the date, time and location for the following, including the facts of each:

When you first recognised, or were told about the abuse (including who told you)

Who the alleged perpetrator or perpetrators are

Any witnesses that were present when the concern was raised

What the child’s behaviour was like at the time, including what they said (note down the exact words they used if you can)

Any physical injuries that have been identified, if any

What safeguarding actions have been taken by you or others during and after the event

Any other discussions that were had with the child, their family, carers or other staff members

Any referrals that were made to other agencies, such as community workers, support workers or the

emergency services

And if you reported the case to the police, note down the case reference number, and any decisions that were made and the reasons for those decisions. You can also make a note of your feelings and concerns at the time, and anything else that your organisation deems necessary as part of their safeguarding procedure - you may very well be working from a template that simply requires you to fill out the fields on a form. Sign, date, and store the record safely and securely - making sure that anyone you share it with treats the document with the same level of discretion. You then need to hand this written record to your DSL, or speak to them in person and explain that you've emailed it to them, or logged it onto an online system. You also need to notify your DSL (and anyone else specified in your organisation's safeguarding procedure) if you get any new information or any changes are made to the record.

Reporting means notifying relevant individuals and agencies if you're concerned for a child's safety or wellbeing. It runs alongside making a written record - but reporting may come first if the situation is urgent, or if your organisation's safeguarding policy tells you to report it before you start a written record.

As a matter of course, this usually means reporting to a DSL and allowing them to take the next steps. In this section, we'll look at why it's crucial to report your concerns, and what individuals and agencies may be involved to safeguard a child.

It's not uncommon for someone who has a duty of care for a child, to notice warning signs and hesitate.

It can be daunting, especially if you're not quite sure about what you've seen or heard, if you're worried that you're being over-cautious, or you're concerned that someone will accuse you of being paranoid or discriminatory. You may think you're seeing something that isn't there, or tell yourself you're worried over nothing - but... imagine if you did nothing and your suspicions were correct?

No matter what the situation is, no matter who is allegedly involved - nothing is of a higher priority than the child's safety. So if you suspect something, you need to put your doubts aside, trust your gut, and report it. If you have a concern about someone you work with and you need to report unsafe or illegal behaviour, this is called whistleblowing. Your organisation should have whistleblowing policies and procedures in place. You can ask your manager for more information if you need it. Information sharing, or the lack of it, can actually be the difference between life and death for many children and young people who are at risk.

You need to follow your organisation's safeguarding procedure when you report a concern. This almost always means reporting to a Designated Safeguarding Lead - and they very often take it from there. They also need to be given a copy of your written record as soon as you've completed it. But if there's no time to waste - you should report it to the police and social care before going to your DSL. It may also fall to you get in touch with the child's parents or carers but this will normally only be the case if your DSL is unable to, or they think it's appropriate. After this, and this is likely to be a DSL's responsibility - it's about assessing the level of risk before making any referrals. Safeguarding is a multi-agency effort, and it's common for different groups to get involved to protect a child.

Depending on the level of risk, there are different avenues to go down. This can include referring a

child to youth workers, youth groups, social care workers, counselling, therapy, or specialist groups that are experienced in aiding the recovery of young people who have suffered a certain type of abuse - and it's often a case of getting your local LSCB to help coordinate this. If your concern is about someone who works with the child, even if it's at your place of work, you should make your referral to your Local Authority Designated Officer.

If you feel at all out of your depth, you can call the police on 101 which is a non-emergency number - and they will help you with what to do next. But, if you think the child - or anyone else - is in immediate danger, or if you think a crime has been committed, call 999. And remember, once a child is safe and you've recorded and reported what you need to, take a moment for yourself. This is rewarding and brave work, but it can be tough, and you may need some support too.

If you feel at all out of your depth, if you want further advice and support, or there is an emergency, you can reach out to:

Your organisation's DSL(s)

101- Call the police for non-emergencies and advice

999 - Call the police if there's an emergency

Your **LSCB** (Local Safeguarding Children's Board) or **three safeguarding partners** (local authorities, the police and the health service)

Find yours here - <https://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/list-of-lscb-local-safeguarding-child-boards>

The Social Services

Type your postcode in here to be directed to your local social services website - <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

Childline- Call 0800 1111

"Our tips and techniques, ideas and inspiration, can help you feel more in control."

NSPCC- Call 0808 800 5000 / email help@nspcc.org.uk.

"As long as there's abuse – we will fight for every childhood. Join us."

Key websites, information and links:

GOV.UK – Legislation

Children and Social Work Act 2017 -<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents>

The Children Act 1989 -<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

Sexual Offences Act 2003 -<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>

Children Act 2004 -<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

Care Act 2014 -<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents>

Children and Families Act 2014 -<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents>

Care Certificate: Additional Examples

From the Care Certificate Workbook. Standard 11 Safeguarding Children:

Remember, a parent or carer's health may affect their ability to safeguard, but this is not always the case. Most will be able to care for and safeguard their child, especially with the right support in place.

Examples of the impact of the parent or carer's physical or mental health are:

- may not always be able to cope with taking their child to school or having their friends visit.
- may not always be physically able to give their child a bath or help them to get dressed.

Children and Social Work Act 2017

<https://www.childrenengland.org.uk/children-and-social-work-act-2017>

See **Children England** for an outline of what the **Children and Social Work Act** covers. It briefly discusses the following:

The main import of the Act - for children in care and care leavers

- Corporate Parenting Principles
- The Local Offer for care leavers
- Personal Advisor up to the age of 25
- The education of previously looked after children
- Care and adoption proceedings
- Placing children in secure accommodation over the border

The main import of the Act - for safeguarding

- Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel
- Local safeguarding arrangements
- Child death reviews
- Protecting whistle-blowers
- Combined authorities

The main import of the Act - for the curriculum

- Relationships and sex education in England schools
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic education

Looked after children

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/children-and-families-at-risk/looked-after-children/#heading-top>

Check out the NSPCC's website for information on looked after children and children in foster care.

SDQ provides a way for patients to communicate with professional mental health professionals, supporting mental health

<http://www.sdqinfo.com/>

UNICEF - The rights of the child

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

"The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, or UNCRC, is the basis of all of Unicef's work. It is the most complete statement of children's rights ever produced and is the most widely-ratified international human rights treaty in history."

Domestic Abuse Recovering Together (DART)

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/services-children-families/dart/>

"Through Domestic Abuse, Recovering Together (DART™), children and mothers can talk to each other about domestic abuse, learn to communicate and rebuild their relationship." - NSPCC

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/services-children-families/dart>

Upskirting

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-law-comes-into-force>

Upskirting is when someone takes a photo or video underneath someone else's clothing, without that person's knowledge or consent. It is a criminal offence. The culprits can be men, women or children. Click the link for further details.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-law-comes-into-force>

From the Care Certificate Workbook. Standard 11 Safeguarding Children:

Remember, a parent or carer's health may affect their ability to safeguard, but this is not always the case. Most will be able to care for and safeguard their child, especially with the right support in place.

Examples of the impact of the parent or carer's physical or mental health are:

- may not always be able to cope with taking their child to school or having their friends visit.
- may not always be physically able to give their child a bath or help them to get dressed.

MARAC

MARAC stands for Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference. The Domestic Violence MARAC is a meeting where agencies talk about the risk of further harm to adults and children who are known or suspected victims of domestic abuse. The meeting takes place to draw up an action plan to help manage that risk. If you would like further information, research "MARAC".

National Referral Mechanism

National Referral Mechanism

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-trafficking/research-resources/national-referral-mechanism-nrm/>

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive appropriate care.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk>

Anti-Cyberbullying - advice for children

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/what-to-do-if-you-re-being-bullied-on-a-social-network/>

Share this information with the children in your care so they know that they have the option - if they want it - to take action against bullying and cyber bullying. This page explains a child's options to them if they are being bullied on different online platforms.

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/what-to-do-if-you-re-being-bullied-on-a-social-network/>

MET Police - reporting malicious content

<https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/har/harassment-on-social-media/>

See this webpage to learn how to report malicious online content.

<https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/har/harassment-on-social-media/>

UK Safer Internet Centre

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk>

"Welcome to the UK Safer Internet Centre, where you can find online safety tips, advice and resources to help children and young people stay safe online."

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk>

iHASCO - Prevent Duty Training

<https://www.ihasco.co.uk/courses/detail/prevent-duty-training>

Click the link check out information on our short course on the Prevent Duty for all the information you need. Prevent is a safeguarding duty, meaning that legislation requires schools and childcare providers to help prevent children and young people from being drawn into extremism and terrorism. It's just a matter of knowing what to look out for, and knowing what steps to take if you have a concern.

<https://www.ihasco.co.uk/courses/detail/prevent-duty-training>

Legislation

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 contains a duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is also known as the Prevent duty.

Terrorism & Extremism: Definitions

Terrorism is the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims. Terrorism includes severely endangering people, or causing serious harm to them. It also includes serious disruption of an electronic system, or severe damage to property.

Extremism is when someone voices their opposition to - or acts in opposition of - our fundamental values, which are: democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance, and the rule of law. Extremism also includes someone calling for the death of members of our armed forces in the UK or overseas.

The Channel Panel

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Channel is part of the Prevent strategy. The process is a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Empowering women in faith organisations, and in the community generally, can have positive effects in reducing and challenging abuse.

Met Police - info on faith abuse

<https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/faith-based-abuse/>

<https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/faith-based-abuse/>

Thank you for reading this document on Safeguarding Children. We hope that you feel confident at recognising the signs that something may not be right - whether it's the poor mental health of a child or potential abuse. We also hope you feel empowered to trust your gut and report your concerns if you have any. Remember never to let a fear about confidentiality, or discrimination, prevent you from sharing information. Safeguarding children is a multi-agency effort - and by sharing information and working together, you can save lives and offer safety and support to the children in your care. All you have to do is play your part by using your professional judgement and of course, the training you've received. Your management and your organisation's Designated Safeguarding Leads are on hand to support you in this

role. We also have contact details for further support should you need it.

Please keep this information somewhere safe so that you can refer back to it whenever you need to.

Please sign and date below and send by email to hello@educationselectionbox.com, putting 'safeguarding info read by (your name) on (date)' in the subject bar.

I confirm that I have read and understood the information about safeguarding children.

Name (signature)

Name (typed)

Date