

David Nieper
ACADEMY

**SAFEGUARDING AND
CHILD PROTECTION
POLICY
2016-2017**

DAVID NIEPER ACADEMY

SAFEGUARDING / CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

2016-2017

Named staff with specific child protection responsibilities during 2016/17 and other contacts:

- Designated Senior Person for Child Protection: Dr Kathryn Hobbs - Headteacher
- Other staff with child protection responsibilities:
Mrs Emma Merchant – Assistant Headteacher, Pastoral
Mrs Lisa Howard – Pastoral Support Manager
Mrs Anna West - SENco
- Nominated Governor
- Call Derbyshire – 01629 533190
- LADO – Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board – 01629 531299

Introduction

David Nieper Academy fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school. The aim of the policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety and health by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate. The pupils' welfare is of paramount importance.

This policy is consistent with:

- *the legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as described in section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the DCSF guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment (March 2013);*
- *the Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LCSB) Procedures, which contain the inter-agency processes, protocols and expectations for safeguarding children;*
- *Derbyshire Children & Young People's Service Policy and Procedures "Safeguarding Children in Education"*

There are four main elements to our Child Protection Policy:

- Prevention (e.g. positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to pupils)
- Appropriate and sensitivity to Child Protection concerns
- Support (to pupils and school staff and to children who may have been abused);
- Working with parents (to ensure appropriate communications and actions are undertaken).

This policy applies to all staff, governors and visitors to the school. We recognise that child protection is the responsibility of all staff within our school. We will ensure that all parents and other working partners are aware of our child protection policy by mentioning it in our school prospectus, displaying appropriate information in our reception and by raising awareness at initial meetings with parents of new pupils as well as at regular parent-teacher meetings.

Where the Governing Body provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Governing Body should seek assurance in writing that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

Academy Commitment

The school adopts an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of its responsibility for pastoral care. Staff hope that children and parents will feel free to talk about any concerns and will

see school as a safe place when there are difficulties. Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously and children are encouraged to seek help from members of staff.

Our school will therefore:

- *Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;*
- *Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty (i.e. provision of sexual health facilities – school nurse who can supply the morning after pill, condoms, chlamydia testing and sexual health advice.)*
- *Provide students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, and which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills;*
- *Communicate as appropriate with colleagues from other agencies;*
- *Operate safe recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children, including references and Criminal Record Bureau and List 99 checks.*

Roles and Responsibilities – General

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This includes a responsibility to be alert to possible abuse and to record and report concerns to staff identified with child protection responsibilities within the school. Staff must be aware of expectations as set out in the Appendix 5 - Safeguarding Information to Staff. There are, however, key people within the school and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities. The names of those carrying these responsibilities for the current year are listed at the start of this document.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Governing Body

In accordance with the DCSF document *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*, the Governing Body will ensure the following.

- The school has a safeguarding/child protection policy and procedures in place, and the policy is made available to parents on request.
- The school operates safe recruitment practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff and volunteers. Furthermore, the Headteacher and a nominated Governor have undertaken the NCSL safer recruitment on-line training and assessment and that other senior members of staff, if involved in leading on recruitment, have undertaken the NCSL off-line safer recruitment training and assessment
- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers.
- There is a senior member of the school's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection (the "Designated Senior Person for Child Protection").
- The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection and her deputy undertakes training, in addition to basic child protection training, in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards agreed by, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), and has refresher training at **two-yearly** intervals.
- The Headteacher, and all other staff and volunteers who work with children, undertake appropriate training which is kept up-to-date by refresher training at yearly intervals; and that new staff, temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities. (Through the induction process)
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to the attention of the Governing Body are rectified.
- The Chair of Governors (or, in the absence of a Chair, the Vice Chair) deals with any allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher, in liaison with the Local Authority
- Policies and procedures are reviewed annually, and information is provided to the Local Authority on how the Governing Body discharges its duties regarding safeguarding and child protection.
- There is an individual member of the Governing Body who will champion issues to do with safeguarding children and child protection within the school, liaise with the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection, and provide information and reports to the Governing Body.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Headteacher

The Headteacher of the school will ensure that:

- the policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are fully implemented, and followed by all staff;
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children;
- all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection

The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection, or her deputy, is the first point of contact for liaison with and the provision of information to the Local Authority, to fulfil the duty of the Governing Body in this regard. The role of the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection and her deputy, includes:

1. Provision of information to the Local Authority on associated matters:

- be the first point of contact with the Local Authority;
- provide information to the Local Authority on how the Governing body discharges its duties regarding safeguarding and child protection.
- liaise with the Governing Body and the Local Authority on any deficiencies brought to attention of the Governing Body and how these should be rectified.

2. Referrals:

- refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies, involving in particular close liaison with the local children's social care office;
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies;
- liaise with the Headteacher to inform her of any issues and on-going investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role.

3. Training:

- recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral;
- have a working knowledge of how LSCBs operate, the conduct of a child protection case conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy especially new or part-time staff who may work with different educational establishments;
- ensure all staff have induction training covering child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise;
- be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals/concerns;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses every two years.

4. Raising Awareness:

- ensure the school's safeguarding / child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually, and work with the governing body regarding this;
- ensure that parents can see a copy of the policy, and that they are alerted to the policy and the fact that referrals may be made, for example by text in the school's prospectus;
- where children leave the establishment, ensure their child protection file is copied for new establishment as soon as possible, but transferred separately from the main pupil file.

5. Records of concerns and complaints:

- maintain and monitor child protection records, including monitoring and acting upon individual and patterns of concerns or complaints.

6. Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Procedures, Local Authority Safeguarding Policy and other related local and national documents:

- maintain these in good order, e.g. according to any updates issued;
- ensure that relevant staff are aware that these procedures are also available on the LSCB website: www.derbyshirescb.org.uk

Records and Monitoring

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. All staff are clear about the need to record and report concerns about a child or children within our school. The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection is responsible for such records and for deciding at what point these records should be passed over to other agencies.

Records relating to actual or alleged abuse or neglect are stored apart from normal pupil or staff records including any CAF (Common Assessment Framework) forms. Normal records have markers to show that there is sensitive material stored elsewhere. This is to protect individuals from accidentally accessing sensitive material.

Child protection records are stored securely, with access confined to specific staff, i.e. the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection, the Headteacher and the Student Welfare Officer (or the next most senior member of staff).

Child protection records are reviewed regularly to check whether any action or updating is needed. This includes monitoring patterns of complaints or concerns about any individuals and ensuring these are acted upon.

When children transfer school their records are transferred too. If there is child protection material, this is transferred separately and direct to the relevant member of staff in the receiving school, with any necessary discussion or explanation. A record is kept of the date of such transfer of sensitive files and of the person to whom they are transferred to. In the event of a child moving out of area and a physical handover not being possible then the most secure method should be found to transfer the confidential records. This would include informing a senior member of the new school that the records are being sent and a photocopy kept and then destroyed when the new school confirms receipt of the records.

Vulnerable Children - Supporting Pupils at Risk

Our school recognizes that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and view the world in a positive way. For such children school may be one of the few stable, secure and predictable components of their lives. Other children may be vulnerable because, for instance, they have a disability, are in care, or are experiencing some form of neglect. We will seek to provide such children with the necessary support and to build their self-esteem and confidence.

Support for Staff

Staff as part of their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people may hear information, either from the child/young person as part of a disclosure or from another adult that will be emotionally upsetting.

Where a member of staff is emotionally disturbed as a result of dealing with a child protection concern, he/she should in the first instance speak to the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection or her deputy about the support he/she requires.

The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection or her deputy should seek to arrange support for the member of staff via the Local Authority. Alternatively, the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection or her deputy can refer the member of staff to Victim Support, a national charity which helps people affected by crime and which provides free and confidential support.

Complaints or Concerns Expressed by Pupils

Alfreton Grange recognises that listening to children/young people is an important and essential part of safeguarding them against abuse and neglect. To this end any expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child/young person will be listened to and acted upon in order to safeguard his/her welfare. We will also seek to ensure that the individual child/young person who makes a complaint is informed not only about the action the school will take but also the length of time that will be required to resolve the complaint. The school will also endeavour to keep the child/young person regularly informed as to the progress of his/her complaint.

Recruitment and Selection of Staff

The school's processes conform to the DCSF Guidance: Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education January 2007. If the school is asked to provide references for a member of staff about whom there have been concerns about child protection/inappropriate conduct, then they have a duty to make those concerns known.

The school maintains this policy by adopting a code of conduct and having an induction process that includes elements on safeguarding. (DCSF have "Guidance for safer working Practice for the protection of children and staff in educational settings" available through teachernet and Working Together to Safeguard Children, March 2013).

APPENDIX 1

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW IN CASES OF POSSIBLE, ALLEGED OR SUSPECTED ABUSE, OR SERIOUS CAUSE FOR CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD

General

- The Local Safeguarding Children Board's Procedures contain the inter-agency processes, protocols and expectations for safeguarding children. (Available on DSCB website www.dscb.org.uk). The Designated Senior Person (DSP) for Child Protection is expected to be familiar with these, particularly the referral processes.
- It is important that all parties act swiftly and avoid delays.
- The Designated Senior Person (DSP) may seek advice and guidance from Derbyshire County Children and Young People's Service, particularly if there is doubt about how to proceed.
- Written records, dated and attributed, must be made to what has been alleged, noticed and reported, and kept securely and confidentially.
- In many cases of concern there will be an expectation that there have already been positive steps taken to work with parents and relevant parties to help alleviate the concerns and effect an improvement for the child. This is appropriate where it is thought a child may be in need in some way, and require assessment to see whether additional support and services are required. An example might be where it is suspected a child may be the subject of neglect. In most cases the parents' knowledge and consent to the referral are expected, unless there is reason for this not being in the child's interest. However, there will be circumstances when informing the parent/carer of a referral might put the child at risk, and an individual case advice from the children's social care will need to be taken.

Individual Staff/Volunteers/Other Adults – main procedural steps

- When a child makes a disclosure, or when concerns are received from other sources, do not investigate, ask leading questions, examine children, or promise confidentiality. Children making disclosures should be reassured and if possible at this stage should be informed what action will be taken next.
- As soon as possible write a dated and timed note of what has been disclosed or noticed, said or done.
- Report to the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection in the school, even if the concern involves the conduct of a member of staff or volunteer, a visitor, a governor, a trainee or another young person or child. Pass on the written record.
- If this has not already been done, inform the child (or other party who has raised the concern) what action you have taken.

Designated Senior Person for Child Protection – main procedural steps:

- Begin a case file which will hold a record of communications and actions in a coherent order, to be stored securely.
- Where initial enquiries do not justify a referral to the investigating agencies inform the initiating adult and monitor the situation. If in doubt, seek advice from Derbyshire County Children & Young People's Department.
- Share information confidentially with those who need to know.
- Where the initial information reveals a cause for concern about a child in need (S17, Children Act 1989) and a decision has been made to refer the child/young person to the relevant agency, the Inter-Agency Referral Pro-forma must be completed. Alternatively, if the initial information reveals a cause for concern that equates to child protection (S47, Children Act 1989), contact must be made immediately with Call Derbyshire Young People's Services and then the Inter-agency Referral Pro-forma completed **within 24 hours**.
- Make the necessary communications with the LADO.
- If the concern is about children using sexually abusive behaviour, refer to the separate guidance. See chapter 9 in the LSCB procedures.
- If it appears that urgent medical attention is required arrange for the child to be taken to hospital (normally this means calling an ambulance) accompanied by a member of staff who must inform medical staff that non-accidental injury is suspected. Parents must be informed that the child has been taken to hospital.
- Exceptional circumstances: If it is feared that the child might be at immediate risk on leaving school, take advice from children's social care (for instance about difficulties if the school day has ended, or on whether to contact the police). Remain with the child until the Social Worker takes responsibility. If in these circumstances a parent arrives to collect the child, the member of staff has no right to withhold the child. If there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, children's social care should be updated and the Police should be contacted immediately.

APPENDIX 2

PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF (INCLUDING HEADTEACHERS) AND VOLUNTEERS

(References to staff in this process include staff in schools, central services and volunteers. These procedures include descriptions of action undertaken by the school, the local authority services and the Police).

These procedures should be followed in all cases in which there is an allegation or suspicion that a person working with children has:

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

Relevant documents:

- *DCSF Guidance: Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education January 2007 chapter 5: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff*
- *LSCB Procedures Chapter 13*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2013*

Individual Staff / Volunteers / Other Adults:

- 1) Write a dated and timed note of what has been disclosed or noticed, said or done.
- 2) Report immediately to the Headteacher.
- 3) Pass on the written record.
- 4) If the allegation concerns the conduct of the Headteacher, report immediately to the Chair of Governors. Pass on the written record.

Headteacher

- 1) If there is no written record, write a dated and timed note of what has been disclosed or noticed, said or done.
- 2) Notify the LADO.
- 3) The Headteacher may be asked to clarify details or the circumstances of the allegation, but this must not amount to an investigation.
- 4) Copies of the documents concerning the allegation must be sent to DCC on the same day, ideally by facsimile.
- 5) Report to Derbyshire Children & Young People Services in relevant cases, on the Local Authority's advice.
- 6) On-going involvement in cases continue: liaison with the Local Authority and co-operate with the investigating agencies enquiries as appropriate; consideration of employment issues and possible disciplinary action where the investigating agencies take no further action.

Chair of Governors (only relevant in the case of an allegation against the Headteacher)

- 1) If there is no written record, write a dated and timed note of what has been disclosed or noticed, said or done.
- 2) Notify the LADO on the same day.
- 3) The Chair may be asked to clarify details or the circumstances of the allegation, but this must not amount to an investigation.
- 4) Copies of the documents concerning the allegation must be sent to the Local Authority on the same day, ideally by facsimile.
- 5) Report to children's social care in relevant cases; in cases concerning Headteachers, the report to children's social care is sometimes undertaken by the Local Authority on behalf of the Chair of Governors, following discussion.
- 6) On-going involvement in cases continue: liaison with the Local Authority and co-operation with the investigating agencies enquiries as appropriate; consideration of employment issues and possible disciplinary action where the investigating agencies take no further action.

Local Authority:

Identifies an officer to liaise further with the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if the allegation concerns the Headteacher), in consultation with the relevant Assistant Director of Education, and provides advice on how to proceed.

- Monitors cases through its Casework Monitoring Group
- Keeps written records.
- Liaises with children's social care and the Police in relevant cases.
- Makes summary reports to the DCSF on request on the number and sorts of allegations which have occurred.

Initial action (Children & Young People's Service): usually same day or next day if key staff are not immediately available

Discussions take place involving a senior officer and representatives of the Local Authority, the Personnel department and the LADO. This is to:

- share what information is available, both from the source of the allegation and also from the Personnel and child protection files
- identify what other information might be needed
- come to a view on the seriousness of the allegation
- consider whether the alleged perpetrator should continue working or remain in contact with children
- consider whether suspension is appropriate advice to the school on this aspect
- decide what information and/or advice is to be given to the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if the allegation is about the Headteacher), including whether the member of staff should be informed of the allegation at this stage
- decide what action is needed, and who needs to be involved and informed.

Initial action and discussions (inter-agency)

The Headteacher/DSP will in the first instance contact the Local Authority. If it is then decided, on the basis of the referral or subsequent initial assessment, that child protection enquiries are required, a strategy meeting must be held. The timescales are as for any referral – 24 hours to decide that an initial assessment is required, and up to 7 working days to complete an initial assessment. Once an investigation is under way and it has been agreed that the member of staff

should be informed, agencies should identify clear and named points of contact for regular updates, advice and support to the member of staff and their representatives in individual cases.

From the above discussions, there are three possible courses of action:

- it may be the subject of a Police and/or joint Police and children's social care investigation and possible action through the courts; or
- it may be the subject of a disciplinary investigation
- the matter may be remitted to the school to be dealt with

If children's social care and the Police decide to take no action the school will generally still need to consider further investigation. The Personnel Unit will work with the school in these circumstances.

Case subject to police investigation

If the initial action discussions and/or Strategy Meeting conclude that a Police or Police/children's social care investigation is required, the DCSF expects that the Police will:

- i. consider whether to consult the CPS about the evidence that will need to be obtained in order to charge the person with an offence without delay;
- ii. consult the CPS if the person has not been charged, to consider whether to proceed with the investigation or refer the case back to the employer; (The DCSF expects that where possible a review date should be set **no later than 4 weeks** after the initial action meeting, with subsequent reviews at least every 4 weeks.)
- iii. if the decision is not to prosecute or caution the individual, the Police will pass all relevant and appropriate information they have to the Local Authority, if practical, **usually within 3 working days**.

If the case comes to trial, the Crown Prosecution Service is responsible for the timescales, but the DCSF expects that:

- i. If the person is charged with an offence, the case will be scheduled to be heard **as soon as possible**.
- ii. Immediately after a trial the Police will provide a report to the education services and in the case of an acquittal will provide all relevant information they have.

Further Local Authority action:

The Casework Monitoring Group will then consider and:

- i. share what information is available from the Police
- ii. identify what other information might be needed
- iii. come to a view on what advice should be given to the school regarding a course of action
- iv. consider again whether the alleged perpetrator should be in post
- v. pass the case to the Personnel Department to contact the school.

The Personnel Unit will discuss the information with the Headteacher (or the Chair of Governors alone if the information is about the Head) to help decide whether a disciplinary hearing or further investigation is needed, **usually within 3 working days**. Where the matter is remitted to the school to resolve appropriate action, it is expected that initial action will be taken usually within 3 working days. The Personnel Unit will support schools in these circumstances and ensure the timescales are kept. Where a disciplinary investigation is required the Personnel Department will support the school according to the level of service purchased by the school. (If the allegations involve the Headteacher, the Personnel support is given to the Chair of Governors regardless of whether the school has purchased Personnel Services.) The Personnel Unit may support the school in various ways, for instance by arranging for an investigation to be conducted by a person independent of the school. An investigating officer should aim to provide a report within 10 working days. If possible a disciplinary hearing should be held within a further 15 working days.

GENERAL

Monitoring casework

Allegations against staff and volunteers will be monitored in the local authority through the regular casework monitoring meeting chaired by the Assistant Director Social Care.

Records

All records and documents about individual allegations against staff and volunteers are kept securely with the Local Authority, separate from normal staff and child records, and with access limited to officers who may be key workers for cases.

Transfer of records

Where there have been concerns about a member of staff and he/she leaves the authority to work elsewhere, the Casework Monitoring Group will consider the question of passing the concerns to the new employer/authority.

Reporting to the DCSF

Anonymised data on allegations is regularly required by the DCSF from the local authority, particularly to track how quickly cases are progressed. If on the conclusion of a case the school ceases to use the person's services, or other the person ceases to provide his/her services, the school should consult the local authority about whether a referral to the DCSF is required.

Contacts and support for staff who are the subject of allegations

Where allegations are made against staff or volunteers, the identified officer in the Local Authority is the first contact point for the person concerned and his/her representative(s).

The DCSF has included in its guidance the protection of pupils and students in workplace placements and the local authority will consider issuing its own guidance on this in due course.

Abuse of Trust

Abuse of trust: the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which makes it an offence for a person over 18 to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where the person is in a position of trust (e.g. teacher, youth worker), even if the relationship is consensual.

APPENDIX 3

Information for Parents

Suggested wording for an insertion in the school's prospectus or a letter to parents:

Child Protection: Safeguarding Children – Information for Parents

Our school feels it is of the utmost importance to have good systems for protecting children and safeguarding their welfare, throughout all the activities which the school undertakes. This means that staff and volunteers must be alert to possible concerns about every pupil, and to report these in a proper fashion. The school has a safeguarding and child protection policy: parents may request a copy of this.

It is important for parents to be aware that:

Staff and volunteers in the school have a duty to report concerns about a child, whether this means the child may be in need of additional support or help of some kind or whether it is thought that a child may have been abused or be at risk of abuse.

There are four categories of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional, neglect. In some cases the school is obliged to refer children to children's social care staff, for children to be assessed for their needs or if an investigation into possible child abuse is required. In many cases there will already have been discussions between school staff and the parents of the child, and the situation and concerns will not be a surprise to the parents. However, parents may not be told that the school has referred their child to children's social care if it is thought that this might put the child at risk.

Children's social care tries to carry out its enquiries in a sensitive fashion. It has to gather information and generally it can be open with parents about the steps being taken. If you think your child may have been abused you can contact the children's social care office. If you think the abuse may have happened in school, contact the Headteacher or the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection, who is Mrs Caley. If you think your child has been hurt, arrange to visit your doctor. Comfort and reassure your child.

If school staff need to express concerns about a child or refer a child to children's social care, it is understood that this can cause distress or anger for the child's parents. It is important that all parties – parents and school staff – try to discuss these matters as calmly and sensibly as possible.

For parents' enquiries please contact:

Dr Kathryn Hobbs, Headteacher and Designated Senior Person for Child Protection or Mrs Emma Merchant, Assistant Headteacher, Pastoral

APPENDIX 4

Possible Indicators of Child Abuse

The following circumstances are **possible** indicators of child abuse and **should** trigger further enquiries:

- Bruises which are not consistent with the common range of accidental childhood bruises
- Delay in the presentation of an injury
- An injury which is not consistent with the explanation given
- Changing or differing accounts of how the injury occurred
- An unexplained injury

Types of bruising which **may** indicate child abuse include:

- Hand slap marks
- Marks evidently made by an implement
- Pinch or grab marks
- Grip marks

Types of injury which **may** indicate child abuse include:

- Burns inside the mouth, inside arms and on the genitals
- Scalds where the child appears to have been "dipped"
- Cigarette burns, burns with an object
- Bite marks
- Evidence of old or repeated fractures
- Bruises on a child who is not mobile

Remember

It is not your responsibility to decide whether a bruise or injury is child abuse or not. If you have any concerns, suspicion or doubt about bruising or injury to a child then do not delay in notifying Dr Kathryn Hobbs, Mrs Emma Merchant, Mrs Lisa Howard or Mrs Anna West.

SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Although there are some indicators relating to sexual abuse, in many cases this form of abuse is well hidden, with the only overt signs being a child's behaviour in general or towards an individual, and this may be attributable to many things unrelated to sexual abuse. This makes sexual abuse very difficult to identify.

The following **may** be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Bruising to breasts, buttocks, inner thighs and around the genital or anal area could be a sign of sexual abuse as well as physical abuse
- Pseudo-mature or sexually explicit behaviour
- Continual open masturbation or aggressive sex play with peers (as distinct from normal sexual curiosity)
- Extreme use of sexually explicit language and or detailed descriptions/drawings of sexual activity
- Complaint of "pains" in tummy, bottom, vaginal areas with no medical explanation
- Teenage pregnancy
- A sexually transmitted infection

The presence of the above in any child is of concern. Concerns such as these should be discussed with the designated child protection officer, Dr Hobbs or a member of the team.

Remember

It is not your responsibility to decide whether a child is being sexually abused or not. If you have any concerns, suspicion or doubt, then do not delay in notifying Dr Hobbs or a member of the team.

Investigation of sexual abuse allegations requires very careful planning and co-ordination between social care and the police and in this area of child abuse professionals are advised not to alert a parent to their concern before seeking advice from either their designated professional and social care.

SIGNS OF NEGLECT

There are no specific indicators which indicate neglect, other than that the child's basic needs are not adequately met. Neglect is a pattern, not an event, so it is important to consider the standard of care the child receives over time; a pattern of neglect may be missed if each individual event is considered in isolation.

The following **may** be indicators of neglect:

- Faltering growth
- Underweight
- Always dirty and smelly, with an unkempt physical appearance
- Consistently dressed inappropriately for the weather or always dressed in ill-fitting shoes and clothes
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings alone or left home alone to self-care
- Frequent accidental bruising or injury in young children indicating poor supervision
- Always hungry
- Child left at home alone or with inappropriate carers
- Persistent non-attendance at school
- Child regularly not collected or received from school care
- Failure to take up essential medical appointments

SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Behavioural problems in children are common and often reflect how a child is dealing emotionally with normal development and or significant events in their life such as: the separation of parents, bereavement, birth of a new baby, illness of a parent, a house move or change of school. Therefore associating behavioural difficulties with child abuse is complex. Children who are physically abused, sexually abused or neglected often have behavioural problems but these signs must be looked at in the context of the family circumstances and in conjunction with other indicators of possible abuse.

The following are **possible** indicators of emotional abuse:

- A child who shows signs of depression or withdrawal
- Acting out aggressive behaviour
- A child who is consistently reluctant to go home after school
- A child who struggles to engage in normal social activity and conversation with peers or adults
- Eating problems
- Sleep disturbance
- A child who runs away from home
- A child who displays fear of a particular person or situation may indicate physical or sexual abuse along with emotional abuse
- Children who inflict harm on themselves
- A child who consistently experiences low warmth and high criticism from its parent/guardian
- A child with a very low self-esteem and or who will consistently describe themselves in very negative ways i.e. I am stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly
- Children who show signs of regression
- A sudden unexplained change in the behaviour of a child
- A fixed stare – this has been described as Frozen Awareness

Remember

It is not your responsibility to decide whether a child is being emotionally abused or not. Evaluation of this information is done in consultation with those who know the child well or who have experience in identifying and investigating child abuse.

If you have any suspicion or doubt, then consult with your designated person for child protection, Dr Hobbs or a member of the team.