

ANNEX 9

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

References:

- A. ISI Handbook Part 3 (0910) www.isi.net
- B. "The Early Years Foundation Stage: Statutory Framework 2008" (www.teachernet.gov.uk)
- C. "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" DCSF guidance, dated 2007,
- E "Working Together to Safeguard Children", DCSF guidance dated 2006, www.teachernet.gov.uk
- D. "Every Child Matters: Change for Children in Schools" DCSF guidance, 2005. (www.teachernet.gov.uk)
- E. "What is child abuse?" NSPCC Information document (www.nspcc.org.uk)
- F. EYFS Guidance for Registered Settings, ISI, September 2010.
- G. Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfES, 2008
- H. National Minimum Standards for Boarding schools dated Sep 2010.

Policy Statement

In all of the work that we do at Vinehall, we see the rights, safety and welfare of children as paramount. This means that sometimes we have to take actions which some parents/carers could find threatening. In such cases we will work towards mutual understanding. We will explain our professional responsibilities and we will give every reassurance as to our motives but we will always stress that, for us, children's needs have to come first.

Any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.

General

This policy sets out:

- The Welfare Team and their responsibilities
- How our policy is implemented
- Guidelines for all staff for dealing with cases of suspected child abuse
- Procedures for dealing with cases of suspected child abuse

and is available to parents and prospective parents on the school's website or on request from the school office.

Welfare Team

The Welfare Team comprises a small group of staff who work together to deal with child protection issues across Vinehall School. Members of the Welfare Team will meet once each term and then on an ad hoc basis for discussion and to agree action / monitoring of concerns. Meetings will be convened by the Child Protection Officer (CPO), who directs the Welfare Team, although the Head takes ultimate responsibility for child protection matters.

The Welfare Team is responsible for:

- Reviewing the procedures for and the efficiency with which the child protection duties have been discharged.
- Ensuring that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.
- Approving amendments to child protection arrangements in the light of changing Regulations or recommended best practice.

Members:

| Appointment | Name |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Head | Mr Richard Follett (from 1 Jan 11) |
| Deputy Head / CPO | Mr Geoffrey Whitehead |
| Deputy CPO | Mrs Quelli Coles |
| Head of Pre-Prep (named person responsible for EY child protection) | Mrs Tessa Richardson |
| School Nurse | Mrs Victoria Barwick |
| Designated Governor responsible for overseeing child protection | Mrs Elizabeth Goodman |

Responsibilities of Members of the Welfare Team

Head

The Head takes ultimate responsibility for child protection (CP) referrals and oversees the Welfare team.

Deputy Head / CPO

The Deputy Head / CPO is the designated person with the status and authority to take responsibility for child protection matters. All cases of suspected abuse should be reported to him in the first instance. He will oversee referrals and play an active part in decision-making in child protection matters.

The CPO is responsible for:

- Ensuring he receives training (updated every 2 years) in child protection and inter-agency working.
- Liaising with the Head and keeping him aware of any issues and ongoing investigations.
- Acting as a source of advice, support and expertise within the school and be responsible for co-ordinating action regarding referrals by liaising with Social Services and other relevant agencies over cases of abuse and allegations of abuse, regarding both pupils and members of staff.
- Ensuring there is always child protection cover at the school.
- Ensuring the School's child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually, in conjunction with the designated Governor for child protection.
- Keeping detailed, accurate, secure, written records of referrals or concerns.
- Where pupils leave the School, ensuring that their file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible. If a pupil leaves and the school is not known, the DfE should be alerted so that these children can be included on the database for lost pupils.
- In liaison with the Deputy CPO, check the East Sussex Children's Services Index when children come to Vinehall and monitor personal histories.
- Having training in how to identify abuse and know when it is appropriate to refer a case, together with having a working knowledge of how Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) operate and the conduct of a child protection case conference; and be able to attend and contribute to these when required.

- Ensuring that staff induction includes child protection awareness and that each member of staff has access to and is aware of the School's child protection policy. This is essential in respect of staff that are perhaps part time or work with more than one school (e.g. trainee or supply teachers).
- Monitoring all child protection training undertaken across the school and ensuring that all members of staff receive training at least every 3 years. (Records of all child protection training are to be maintained by the Director of Studies).
- Attending any relevant or refresher training courses (at least every 2 years) and then ensure that any new or key messages are passed to other staff and governors.

Deputy CPO

The Deputy CPO will:

- Assist the CPO and keep him aware of current issues.
- Attend relevant training.
- Maintain CP files.
- Organise training for members of the Welfare Team (and ongoing advice)
- Assist the Director of Studies in organising training for the whole staff every three years.
- Assist the CPO in checking children on the Children's Index.

Head of Pre-Prep

The Head of Pre-Prep will:

- Be the named person responsible for EY child protection in liaison with the CPO and Welfare Team.
- Collect CP-related information from the Pre-Prep department from staff, parents and children and will pass all CP notes to the Deputy CPO for filing separately.
- Liaise with the Welfare Team and between the Welfare Team and parents/staff in the Pre-Prep.
- Ensure that Pre-Prep staff are aware of CP procedures and practices at Vinehall.

School Nurse

The School Nurse will liaise between the Welfare Team and parents/pupils.

Governors

The Governor designated with CP responsibility will attend:

- The termly meetings of the Welfare Team
- An annual policy review meeting, Minutes of which will be sent to Governors through the Risk Committee.

Implementation

Vinehall School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the school. Copies of this policy, together with our other policies relating to issues of child protection are on our web site, and we hope that parents and guardians will always feel able to take up any issues or worries that they may have with the school. We will never ignore an allegation of child abuse and will always investigate any concerns thoroughly. Open communications are essential.

Our policy applies to all staff and governors working in the school, all of whom have a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and for ensuring that

they are protected from harm. There are five main elements to our policy:

- **Following the Government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff who work with children.** All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the school, including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches, are checked with the Criminal Records Bureau before starting work. All Governors, volunteer helpers, contractors working regularly during term-time, such as contract catering staff, [and adult members of the families of members of staff who live on site] are also vetted. Our policies are reviewed by Governors annually. More detail is set out in our policy on Checking Employees, Temporary Workers, Governors, Proprietors, Volunteers and Contractors (which is on our web site).
- **Raising awareness** of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- **Developing and then implementing procedures** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- **Supporting pupils** who have been abused (in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan).
- **Establishing a safe environment** in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, particularly in a boarding school setting. We will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, 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.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills that they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and have regard to guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) / Department for Schools, Families and Children (DCSF) to:

- Provide a designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) and Welfare Team who have received appropriate training in child protection and inter-agency working and support for this role together with training updates every two years.
- Designate a school governor to be responsible for overseeing child protection; reviewing the school's policies and procedures annually; reviewing, annually, the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.
- Ensure that every member of staff and governor knows the name of the CPO, his deputy and their roles.
- Provide training in child protection for the Head and all staff (including Support Staff), with updates every three years.
- Ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the CPO.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the Parents' Handbook.
- Notify Social Services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written, dated and signed records of concerns about children, even when there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Keep records in a locked drawer, separate from the main pupil file (CPO and Deputy CPO only to have a key).
- Follow the procedures when an allegation of abuse is made against a member of

staff set out at Annex 45.

- Ensure that safe recruitment and selection practices are always followed (see SOP 002 below).
- Follow the agreed inter-agency procedures set out in the Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures.
- Ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are rectified without delay.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. We will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum (for example PSHE lessons).
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will aim to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

All staff and parents should be fully aware of the school's Child Protection Policy and to whom they should report any concerns. Pre-Prep staff should report any concerns to Head of Pre-Prep, who will discuss with the CPO.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Early Years (EY) children at Vinehall refer to children from 2 to 5 years of age in our Pre-Nursery, Nursery, Kindergarten and Reception classes. Vinehall EY is included in the Child Protection Policy and Procedures with the whole school. This includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation made against a member of staff. All staff understand the safeguarding policy and procedures.

Vinehall takes necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Requirements for EY children comply with the EYFS statutory framework and sit alongside other legal obligations, legislation and Vinehall School policies which cover children of statutory school age. As a registered EY provider, the EY at Vinehall follows the guidance published by DCSF on safeguarding children, information sharing and confidentiality. The Child Protection Policy and Procedures is given to all members of staff as part of their induction and is accessible to parents on the website.

In addition to notifying child protection agencies, as a registered provider for EY children, Ofsted must be informed of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises, or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. Ofsted should be informed as soon as reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.

The Head of Pre-Prep is a member of the Welfare Team and is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS setting. The Head of Pre-Prep will be involved in liaising with local statutory children's services agencies. The Head of Pre-Prep regularly attends child protection training courses.

In addition to whole school Inset training and Pre-Prep meetings, the EY staff have separate meetings to review, monitor and evaluate EY practices and the findings inform the department SEF and action planning.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL STAFF FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Children

At the beginning of term, form teachers should ensure that their class understand that if they have any problems or complaints they should feel able to tell one of the following:

- Class / Form teacher
- Subject teacher
- School Nurse
- Matron
- Houseparent
- Deputy Head
- Head / Head of Pre-Prep
- Any other member of staff (including Pre-Prep Teaching Assistants / Individual Learning Support Assistants).

The children should feel assured that the staff will listen sympathetically and non-judgementally and that:

- If they do not feel able to talk to a member of Vinehall staff that they may see the School Doctor at surgery time.
- There is an option of seeing a female Doctor if required.
- They have access to the pay phone and to ChildLine. The phone number for ChildLine is posted in the pay phone box (0800 1111).

Parents

Parents are encouraged to share minor problems with their child's form teacher or appropriate member of staff. If appropriate, the problem will be taken to and dealt with by a Head of Department. Problems of a more serious nature should be raised either orally or in writing with the Head, as set out in the Prep Parents' Handbook.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

What Is Child Abuse?

The NSPCC defines child abuse as:

“Child abuse is the term used when an adult harms a child or a young person under the age of 18.....Child abuse can take four forms, all of which can cause long term damage to a child: physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and child sexual abuse. Bullying and domestic violence are also forms of child abuse.

“A child may be experiencing abuse if he or she is:

*Frequently dirty, hungry or inadequately dressed
Left in unsafe situations, or without medical attention
Constantly “put down,” insulted, sworn at or humiliated
Seems afraid of parents or carers
Severely bruised or injured
Displays sexual behaviour which doesn't seem appropriate for their age
Growing up in a home where there is domestic violence
Living with parents or carers involved in serious drug or alcohol abuse*

“Remember, this list does not cover every child abuse possibility. You may have seen other things in the child’s behaviour or circumstances that worry you.

“Abuse is always wrong and it is never the young person’s fault.”

Abuse may happen at home or at school. All staff (and in particular the School Nurse, matrons, boarding and PE staff) have opportunities to observe evidence of abuse or neglect. All staff must be aware of the possibility of abuse and be vigilant. Suspicions of abuse may arise through observation or from information from parents, children, or other staff.

If any member of staff has suspicions of abuse having taken place whether physical, sexual, emotional or neglect, they have an ABSOLUTE DUTY to report their suspicions to the Head and the school’s CPO immediately (unless the CPO is accused or absent, in which case the Head / Head of Pre-Prep should be approached, as appropriate). Any allegations made against the Head must be reported immediately to the CPO, who is to inform the Chairman of Governors immediately, without notifying the Head first.

The CPO and Deputy CPO have a 24-hour phone number available to all. (CPO: (M): 07813 153533 and Deputy CPO: (H): 01424 838486 or (M): 07941 183365) The designated person for EY is available on (H): 01424 830351 or (M): 07714 257958. It is essential for the CPO to keep clear, factual notes, dated and signed for the school records. The School Nurse keeps a record of physical injuries and is informed from any A & E Department if a Vinehall School child attends and the reason for attending.

The CPO will follow the procedures set out in the Common assessment Framework (CAF), contained in the Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures.

The ‘LADO’ should be contacted immediately for advice (Richard Munro: 01323 466606) and the police in the case of serious harm.

Signs and Monitoring

Regular meetings of staff who are responsible for the care and welfare of the children are encouraged, and it is hoped that any unhappiness, distress or abnormal behaviour in a child would come out at these meetings. Staff have a RESPONSIBILITY to share information that is relevant to the welfare of pupils.

Staff are encouraged to look out for any of the following (with a further, more detailed list at Appendix 1):

- Any abnormal behaviour, including changes in character or performance
- Changes in eating pattern loss of appetite or excessive preoccupation with food
- Loss of self-esteem
- Onset of attention seeking, disobedience or aggression
- Signs of neglect or deterioration in child’s general well-being
- Severe sleep disturbances and nightmares, especially with sexual content
- Comments which give cause for concern; any words or actions indicating any problems, other than minor ones, at home or in school, including inconsistencies between parental explanations and those from children
- Any physical sign such as bruising, unexplained bleeding, difficulty in any normal bodily functions and any aches or pains which seem to have no physical cause
- Inconsistencies between parental explanations and those from children

Any hints from children about sexual activity or abuse of any kind amongst the children or from a member of staff on a child must be reported to the Head / Head of Pre-Prep and CPO.

If staff are concerned about a child's well-being but feel that it is not a child protection issue, they should discuss their concerns with the CPO and Head / Head of Pre-Prep first. Consideration should then be given to sharing that concern with the child's parents and whether to advise counselling from a qualified child counsellor.

WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD APPROACHES YOU

The Children and Young Persons Act 1989 states: "It shall be the duty of 'the school' to cause enquiries to be made into the case unless they are satisfied that such enquiries are unnecessary."

If a child approaches you:

- Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
- If possible, write brief notes of what they are telling you while they are speaking (these may help later if you remember exactly what was said) – and keep your original notes, however rough and even if you wrote on the back of something else (it's what you wrote at the time that may be important later – not a tidier and improved version you wrote up afterwards). If you don't have the means to write at the time, make notes of what was said as soon as possible afterwards. Always date the notes. Good record-keeping underpins future action.
- Do not give a guarantee that you will keep what is said confidential or secret – if you are told about abuse you have a responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it. If asked, explain that you are going to be told something important that needs to be sorted out; that you will need to tell the people who can sort it out; but that you will only tell people who absolutely have to know.
- Don't ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what might have happened (e.g. "Did he do X to you?"); ask instead questions like "What do you want to tell me?" or "Is there anything I ought to know?" or "Can you tell me when... who...?"
- Immediately tell the CPO, unless he/ she is accused or suspected of abusing, in which case you should tell the Head. Make sure that when you do so you distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. The CPO will inform the Head. You should not tell other adults or children what you have been told.
- Discuss with the CPO whether any steps need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse (this may need to be discussed with the person who told you).
- Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse. Social services and police are trained to do this; you could cause more damage and spoil possible criminal proceedings.
- As soon as possible (and certainly the same day) the CPO should refer the matter to the Duty and Assessment Team (tel: 01424 724144). The Duty Officer there will give advice and, if the CPO decides to make an official referral he will, within 24 hours, complete and fax to the Social Services a referral form. The Social Services Child Protection team will then decide whether to set in motion any investigations. A full and careful investigation may follow. This will result in contact with any or all of the following: School Nurse, matrons, doctors, the LEA Welfare Service, the parents of the child, the adult implicated, the child (if appropriate) and the Chairman of the

Governing Body.

- Never think abuse is impossible at Vinehall, or that an accusation against someone you know well and trust is bound to be wrong.
- Children often tell other young people, rather than staff or other adults, about abuse. It is therefore important to make sure that prefects and other older pupils are aware of relevant points on this sheet. This is included in the Year 8 PSHE programme.

Final Important Points

The Head will ensure that NO adult is given unsupervised access to children without being satisfactorily checked through the DfE/DCSF procedure. Any prospective member of staff will first be CRB checked.

Bullying can develop into physical and sexual abuse – as can idiosyncratic punishments introduced by individuals. Our school practices must be effective in countering and monitoring bullying and the misuse of discipline.

We must be vigilant for early warning signs of inappropriate behaviour of staff: for example favouritism, development of excessive one-to-one contact and increased involvement with showering and changing. Any member of staff with any suspicion or concern must talk to the CPO about this. It is important to raise such issues to create the right, safe climate in school.

Open discussion with pupils should be encouraged regarding issues such as times of day or week and locations in school that are high risk for bullying or illicit activities.

If an allegation or suspicion occurs, the CPO will consult Social Services on issues such as informing parents, other children or staff and seeking medical help.

The school aims to co-operate as fully as possible with Police and Social Services investigations – and will participate in their planning meetings if appropriate.

A plan for handling media interest and the aftermath of any investigation is available from the Head. This is described in the School's Crisis Management Procedures at Annex 8.

Induction and Training

Every new member of staff, including part-timers, temporary, visiting and contract staff working in school, receives basic training on their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and bullying and on the procedures for recording and referring any concerns to the CPO or the Head. Child protection training is also given to new Governors and volunteers. Everyone attends refresher training at least every three years. Training in child protection is an important part of the induction process.

Interaction with Pupils: Code of Conduct for Staff

New members of staff, Governors and volunteers are briefed of the school's policy on Interaction with Pupils: Code of Conduct for Staff, which provides guidance for teachers and other members of staff when faced with handling any issue relating to child abuse. It is available either on the school's intranet under Staff Handbook, or on the school's website.

The CPO, who has received specialist training in this topic, should always be informed if a member of staff has any concerns.

Raising Awareness with Pupils

Vinehall prides itself on its culture of open and effective communication between staff and pupils, and on its excellent pastoral support structures. We prepare all of our pupils to make reasoned, informed choices, judgments and decisions. Time is allocated in PSHE time for

discussion of child abuse and in developing in pupils the confidence which they require to recognise abuse and to stay safe.

All pupils know that there are adults to whom they can turn to if they are worried, including the School Counsellor, the Chaplain and the School Nurse. In particular:

- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private.
- Every child has a homework diary which contains guidance on who and where to turn for advice, including the confidential help line, ChildLine. This number is also displayed in the dispensary and the pay phone booth.
- We encourage our senior pupils to maintain a watchful eye over younger children and to report any concerns immediately.
- Our policy Policy for Pupils on Confidentiality, which deals with the issue in more depth, was prepared by the whole community, including our pupils.
- Our Policy for Pupils on Confidentiality, which deals with the issue in more depth.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING CASES OF SUSPECTED ABUSE

In ALL cases where abuse is suspected or a sustainable allegation is made members of staff should report the information to the CPO.

The CPO should refer these cases to or discuss them with the investigating agencies according to the procedures established by the local LSCB and by the LADO, as appropriate.

If the CPO is unsure about whether a case should be formally referred or has a general concern about a pupil's health or development, she can seek advice and support from the local Social Services, the NSPCC, or the LADO. The Education Welfare Officer may also be able to offer advice.

Whether or not to make a referral, which could activate a child protection investigation, is a serious decision and will require careful judgement.

When referring a case of suspected or alleged child abuse, the CPO should ask to be informed of the timing of the strategy discussion between the statutory agencies which will decide whether and how to investigate. The CPO may wish to clarify with the investigating agencies when, how and by whom the parents and the pupil will be told that a referral has been made.

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs)

- LSCBs have the primary responsibility for promoting the safeguarding of children in the local community.
- They review local child protection policies and promote effective co-operation between the agencies involved.
- They should play an active role in training school staff in child protection.
- LSCB membership is determined locally and should include representatives of the main agencies responsible for working together to safeguard children.

Records and Reports for Child Protection Conferences

Child protection records should include the DATE, EVENT and ACTION taken. Reports prepared for child protection conferences should focus on the pupil's:

- Educational progress and achievements
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Participation
- Relations with other children and young people
- Appearance, where appropriate

- Interaction with other children and adults.

If relevant, reports should include what is known about the pupil's relations with his or her family and the family structure. Reports should be objective and based on evidence. They should distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion.

The School should:

- Make reports available to the pupil's parents prior to the child protection conference UNLESS TO DO SO WOULD PLACE THE PUPIL AT RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM.
- Provide written reports to the child protection conference.
- Arrange for an appropriate person from the school to attend the child protection conference.
- Ensure that child protection records are held securely with limited access and separate from the main school pupil file.
- Transfer any child protection records if the child moves schools.

Appendices:

1. Indicators of Physical Abuse
2. Definitions of Child Abuse

Related Child Protection Policies:

1. Checking Employees, Temporary Workers, Governors, Proprietors, Volunteers and Contractors
2. Induction of New Staff, Governors and Volunteers in Child Protection
3. Interaction with Pupils: Code of Conduct for Staff
4. Use of ICT, Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices
5. Procedures when a Member of Staff, Volunteer, Child Protection Officer or Head faces Allegations of Abuse
6. Policy for Pupils on Confidentiality Issues
7. Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children

Other Related Documents:

1. Appendix 3 to Annex 8: Guidance for Supporting a Bereaved Child.
2. SOP 002: Procedures for the Recruitment and Selection of Staff (Revised Sep 07). (Paper copies held by Bursar and Head's PA. Electronic copy available at Public / Staff / SOPs / SOP 002 - Recruitment).

INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

Bruises

- To the eyes, mouth or ears
- Finger tip bruising (grasp mark)
- Bruises of different ages in the same place
- Outline bruises (prints of hands, belts, shoes, etc)
- Bruises without obvious and verifiable explanations.

Burns, Bites and Scars

- Clear impressions of teeth (more than 3cm across)
- Burns or scalds with clear outlines
- Small round burns which may be from cigarettes
- Large number of different aged scars
- Unusual shaped scars
- Scars that indicate the child did not receive medical treatment

Other Injuries

- Poisoning, injections, ingestion or other applications of damaging substances including drugs and alcohol
- Female genital mutilation, including female circumcision

Indicators of Neglect Include Children Who Are

- Not receiving adequate food
- Exposed to inadequate, dirty and or cold environments
- Abandoned or left in circumstances without appropriate adult supervision which are likely to endanger them
- Prevented by their carers from receiving appropriate medical advice or treatment

Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Recurrent urinary infections
- Genital and rectal itching and soreness
- Unexplained bleeding and discharges
- Bruising in genital region
- Sexual play/masturbation that is inappropriate to a child's age, development and circumstances
- Sexually abusive behaviour towards other children, particularly those younger and more vulnerable than themselves
- Unexplained pregnancy

Indicators of Emotional Abuse

- Abnormally passive, lethargic or attention seeking behaviour
- Specific habit disorders, e.g. faecal smearing, excessive drinking, eating unusual substances and self harm
- Severely delayed social development, poor language and speech development not otherwise explained
- Excessively nervous behaviour such as rocking or hair twisting
- Low self esteem

The following indicators may occur to any children being abused but are particularly important in cases of sexual or emotional abuse where outward physical signs may not be present:

- Onset of enuresis day or night
- Sleeping and eating disturbance

- Recurrent abdominal pains, especially with no medical reason
- Recurrent headaches
- Social withdrawal
- Restlessness and aimlessness – an air of detachment or ‘don’t care’ attitude
- Inexplicable school failure
- Poor trust and secretiveness
- Indiscriminate and careless sexual behaviour
- Drug abuse
- Running away
- Self-mutilation and other forms of self harm
- Hysterical fits, faints, etc
- Reverting to younger behaviour
- Overly compliant behaviour.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

'Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, or in an institution or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.'

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's emotional needs.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or not valued in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all treatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts (for example rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as fictitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

Bullying and domestic violence are also forms of child abuse.