



Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

Induction Leaflet Guidelines for School Staff

This leaflet contains important and sensitive information for adults. **Please keep it in a safe place.**

Introduction

These guidelines for staff in schools have been produced by KCC's Education Safeguarding Team to provide information about child protection and the procedures that must be observed. Contact names and addresses for further information are also included.

Child Protection in Kent is overseen by the Kent Safeguarding Children Board. All school staff should be aware of and have reference to the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Handbook, which was published in 2007. This guidance is still current but the national guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" was updated in 2010.

In addition to the handbook (small purple book) there is also a large online procedures manual which contains additional material and specific procedures. The on-line manual can be found on the KSCB website (www.kscb.org.uk).

The full extent of child abuse is not easily quantified. Research indicates that children are reluctant to report abuse, particularly if it is happening within their family. Abusers come from all walks of life; they may be parents, a known adult who has built up a trusting relationship with the child, a professional or another child.

Everybody who works with children, especially those who have regular daily contact, has a duty to help protect

children from abuse. They must know how to recognise possible abuse both within their own organisation and externally. They should be familiar with the process of recording information in school and referral to Children's Social Services and the Police.

Staff working with children need to enable them to learn how to keep themselves safe, and ask for help when they need to.

Types of Abuse

Physical abuse

This can range from over-chastisement, slapping with the hand, a belt, a stick or other object, to shaking, punching or throwing a child across the room. It can lead directly to neurological damage, physical injuries, disability or – at the extreme – death. Harm may be caused by the abuse itself and by abuse taking place in a wider family or institutional context of conflict and aggression. It also includes a parent/carer fabricating symptoms of or inducing illness in a child. Some physical abuse is reactive and some may be clearly premeditated with an intent to cause harm.

Neglect

This can range from ignoring a child's developmental needs to not feeding or clothing her/him adequately and not properly supervising her/him. Persistent neglect can lead to serious impairment of health and development, and long-term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress. Neglect may occur by omission or commission – it is important that problems for a child's parent do not obscure neglect of a child in the family. Unborn babies may now be regarded as suffering neglect due to maternal substance misuse.

Sexual Abuse

Is the involvement of a child or adolescent in sexual activities that s/he does not understand, cannot give consent to and which are not acceptable by our society. This includes inappropriate touching, taking of obscene photographs, producing/trading in child pornography (including via the Internet) as well as attempted or actual sexual intercourse. Its adverse effects may endure into adulthood.

Emotional Abuse:

This ranges from rejecting a child, refusing to show a child love or affection, or making a child unhappy by continually belittling her/him or verbally abusing her/him. It has an important impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It may also include developmentally inappropriate expectations including overly high expectations which the child cannot fulfil. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to such abuse. Emotional abuse may occur by omission or commission and it is important the problems for a child's parents do not obscure professionals' view of their child's emotional development.

Bullying – serious bullying causing a child to feel frightened or in danger may now be regarded as emotional abuse.

New technology

The internet and related technologies has created new opportunities for creativity and communication. However with this have come new concerns about sexual grooming of children, cyberbullying and access to inappropriate material. School staff should be aware of the Kent School e-safety policy and safer practice advice. <http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/kcn/e-safety>

Indicators of abuse

Child Abuse can present in many different ways. In simple terms there may be *physical evidence* such as marks or bruises, or in their *presentation or appearance* such as weight loss. There may be *behavioural evidence* such as reluctance to change for P.E, becoming aggressive or withdrawn, falling out with friends.

A child may *disclose abuse*, they may do this directly by telling you what happened or indirectly by telling friends or by asking for advice about a situation, say involving another person.

In school you will particularly notice *changes* in presentation, behaviour, friendships, application to study etc. We ask that you be curious and report anything which may worry you to your Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator (DCPC).

Disclosure

What to do if a child starts to disclose abuse

- Reassure the child that s/he is right to tell and is not to blame
- **DO NOT** promise not to tell anyone else; explain that you have to make sure the child is safe and may need to ask other adults to help you to do this
- **DO NOT** question the child; let her/him tell you what s/he wants to tell you and no more; s/he may need to have to disclose to a specialist later, and too much detail now may interfere with later investigations.
- When the child is finished, make sure s/he feels secure; explain what you are going to do next.
- Write down notes, including the date and time of the interview and sign them; record as much as you can remember, using the child's own words.

What to do if you are concerned

- **immediately inform the designated person in the school**

Every school is required by the DCSF (now DfE) Guidance 'Safeguarding Children in Education' to designate a member of staff for child protection (DCPC). **It is essential that all staff know who this is** (and who to inform if they are not available).

The designated person (DCPC) will decide whether the child should be referred to Children's Social Services. To help him/her decide this, (s)he may consult with the local CSS Duty and Initial Assessment Team or the KCC's Education Safeguarding Team.

Although we would encourage you to use the School's Child Protection process, in certain cases it may be appropriate for any person who is concerned about a child to contact the Education Safeguarding Team or Children's Social Services directly. This is important if for example the concern relates to the Headteacher.

Referring to Social Services

If the child is to be referred to Children's Social Services, the DCPC will ensure that an inter-agency referral form is completed. This can be obtained from Kent Contact and Assessment Service – telephone number is on the contact list later in this leaflet, or alternatively can be downloaded from the Children's Safeguards web page on www.kenttrustweb.org.uk or www.kscb.org.uk

Allegations of abuse made against a member of staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, the designated person must consult with their Area Children's Officer who will help to determine how the matter is to be investigated. Each Local Authority must now have Designated Officer (LADO) responsible for ensuring that allegations are managed in a proper way. The LADO for Kent Education is the Head of the Education Safeguarding Team, Kel Arthur with responsibility delegated to the Children's Officers in the three Areas.

Unconfirmed worries about child abuse

Staff often have unconfirmed worries about pupils, but little real evidence, and so feel unsure about how to proceed. Many cases have shown that these unconfirmed worries are in fact the tip of the iceberg; that if the teacher's information were placed alongside that of, say the School Medical Officer, or a Midday Supervisor, it all added up to a serious cause for concern.

It is vital, therefore, that even vague "worries" are passed on at the earliest stage to the DCPC, who is in a position to involve other agencies, collate information and make decisions about further referral.

Again, staff should record incidents or suspicions, dating and signing the record that should be kept in a secure part of the school with other confidential material.

A copy of the Kent schools recording guidelines is contained on Kenttrustweb and on the Training and Information CD given out as part of the DCPC Training.

Preventative work in the classroom

Pupils need to learn how to keep themselves safe and how to report concerns in school. There are many training and resource packs available to help teachers design a curriculum that empowers children who may be being abused. Various elements can be incorporated into everyday teaching, including issues around touch, secrets, self-esteem, assertiveness and feelings and emotions. Resources such as SEAL are used in many Kent Schools.

Every School should have details of child protection and other policies easily available for staff – possibly in the staff room. Make sure you know where to find them!

Useful names and contacts

Your School's Designated Person(s):

Social Services Professional Consultations
Central Duty Team (CDT):
Tel no: 08458 247102
Fax: 01732 221645

Area Children's Officer (Safeguarding)

Tel No:

Safeguarding Team HQ:	
Care Standards: & Training & Development:	01622 696366
West Kent Area Children's Officer (Safeguarding)	01732 525035
East Kent Area Children's Officer (Safeguarding)	01227 284682
Mid Kent Area Children's Officer (Safeguarding)	01233 898644