

**City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council, Family Services**



# SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

## Child Protection

**Promoting Every Child Matters (ECM) – 5 outcomes for children**

**Be Healthy  
Stay Safe  
Enjoy and achieve  
Make a positive contribution  
Achieve economic well-being**

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**THIS POLICY COMPLIMENTS THE WAKEFIELD DISTRICT  
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD (WDSCB)  
PROCEDURES AND DOES NOT REPLACE THEM**

**THIS POLICY AIMS TO INFORM AND ENSURE GOOD AND  
SAFE PRACTICE**

**This Policy relates to all the childcare services and activities within the Centre including those of the Neighbourhood Nursery 0 to 5's.**

Policy revised – July 2004 amended February 2005

Reviewed and Revised in consultation with designated Governor responsible for  
Child Protection - July 2006 / July 2007

Amended October 2009 (use of mobile phones & images)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Policy represents a commitment by the Governing Body and Staff Team, to the safeguarding and protection of children, throughout the Centre and within the diverse areas of service – LEA Nursery, Neighbourhood Nursery and supporting families' activities. The policy also extends to outside agencies that use the Centre and it is expected that they have their own CP policy or they adopt the Centre's.
- 1.2 The Castle Children's Centre fully recognises the contribution it can make in protecting, supporting and promoting the welfare of children in the Centre. The Governing Body and staff team is committed to ensuring that children are safe, that child protection practice is effective and that procedures are followed. The Centre staff will make every attempt possible to ensure that children are safe from abuse or harm during their time at the Centre and will be vigilant in their observations of children who may be exhibiting signs or symptoms of harm.
- 1.3 It is recognised that children can be at risk from abuse in their own home by people they know well, in institutions and from strangers.

1.4 The principles contained in this Policy promote the five **Every Child Matters**, priority outcomes for children, reflecting the understanding that children are less likely to achieve these outcomes if they are experiencing abuse:

- **Being Healthy**
- **Staying safe**
- **Enjoying and achieving**
- **Making a positive contribution**
- **Achieving economic well being**

1.5 There are three main elements to the Centre's Child Protection Policy:

**1. Prevention**

This applies to a positive atmosphere in the Centre, early identification of difficulty, the curriculum and support and awareness raising for children and parents.

**2. Protection**

By following agreed procedures, ensuring that the recruitment and selection of staff is thorough and appropriate and staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.

**3. Support**

This applies to the effective supervision and management of staff and the support given to staff children and parents in situations of abuse.

## 2. CENTRE COMMITMENT

2.2 The Centre staff recognises that for young children, high self-esteem, confidence, trusted adults and positive behaviour approaches, helps prevention.

### 2.3 The Centre will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Provide a key worker system, which will give the children an opportunity to build a relationship with a particular adult, and that adult will have a key responsibility for the child's well being. The key worker along with other workers will also provide opportunities for the parents of that child to express any concerns or difficulties.
- Provide a curriculum, which is appropriate to the children's understanding and addresses issues of assertiveness, self-esteem and positive behaviour, and promotes the ECM outcomes for children.
- Ensure that the environment welcomes the contributions of parents and establishes open and effective working relationships and partnerships. Parent representatives will have a key role in supporting parents in expressing their views.
- Ensures that all family support activities (Centre based & Outreach) are underpinned by the principles and procedures contained within this policy.

- Ensure that every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with other agencies and professionals, in line with the national framework, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' *revised 2005*.

### 3. FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 The Centre does not operate in isolation; child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children.
- 3.2 The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the **Wakefield & District Safeguarding Children Board (WDSCB)** *See flowchart at the end of policy.*
- 3.3 The **WDSCB** has a membership of multi-agency representatives whose task is to develop policy and procedure for all the agencies involved in the protection of children, i.e. Health, Family Services (Social care), Education, Police, Probation, NSPCC, and Legal services.
- 3.4 The policy and procedure, which relates to each Department, can be found in the online: **West Yorkshire Interagency Safeguarding Procedures**. (See 4.6 of this policy) The Centre's policy has been written in accordance with the local and national framework.

3.5 Children may attend the Centre who are subject to a formal **Child Protection Plan** because they are at risk of significant harm; that is where the child can be shown to have:

suffered ill-treatment or impairment of health or development as a result of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, and professional judgement is that further ill-treatment or impairment are likely; **or**

Professional judgement, substantiated by the findings of enquiries in this individual case or by research evidence, is that the child is likely to suffer ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development as a result of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. (See Appendix – **How to tell if a child is being abused & definitions.**

3.6 The Wakefield District **Child Well Being** model supports good practice and provides a 4 tiered framework for:

- effective information sharing between agencies/organisations,
- interagency thresholds for intervention,
- a common assessment format for all agencies to identify and respond to the needs of children and families.

The 4 tiers represent the stages at which families access services, from tier 1 – Universal, through to tier 4 which is the stage at which a Child Protection referral is made to Social Care Direct (**see Appendix 3**)

The Centre utilises this model in order to work together with others to identify the most appropriate forms of support for families.

Information about the CWB model can be accessed at –

[cwbproject@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:cwbproject@wakefield.gov.uk)

#### **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4.1 All adults working with, or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are however key people within the Centre and the Local Authority Family Services who have specific responsibilities under Safeguarding Children procedures.
- 4.2 The Centre works in a preventive way to assist families to protect children. Where children are subject to a 'Child Protection Plan, the Centre staff will be pro-active in their efforts to work alongside families in order to ensure a safe environment for those children.
- 4.3 The Centre has two Social Workers on the Staff team who act as the designated staff responsible for Child Protection. Their role is to liaise with parents and the Family Services (Social Care) on matters of abuse, develop in-house policies and support staff in their development relating to child protection issues. (Names of designated workers can be found separately at the back of this policy)
- 4.4 The designated CP person (Social Worker) has a responsibility for attending or selecting someone to attend Child Protection Conferences. The Governing Body will also appoint a designated Child Protection Governor who will have an overview of Policy & procedure, although this person will not be involved with individual cases.

- 4.5 The Nursery Teacher will act as link designated CP worker and liase closely with the Centre social worker.
- 4.6 The Centre is not an investigating agency** and anyone who has a suspicion or knowledge that a child is suffering significant harm or is at risk of significant harm should refer his or her concerns to the designated worker, who will then refer to an investigating agency. (Social Care Direct or Police)  
The **WDSCB procedures** set out the appropriate action and procedures to be followed by any agency or individual who has concerns about the welfare of a child. All staff must be aware of these procedures and understand their role.  
The Procedures are now (from July 2007) only available on-line and replace the 'Handbook' – [www.wakefield.gov.uk/lscb](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/lscb)
- 4.7 The Head of Centre should be kept informed during all stages of the incident and in the absence of the Centre Social Worker, should act as designated person. The designated staff are responsible for ensuring the accurate recording and passing on of information.
- 4.8 For reasons of confidentiality, details of individual child protection issues will not be shared with the Governing Body or parent representatives, or discussed in any forum at which parent representatives are in attendance.

## 5. PROCEDURES

- 5.1 The Centre staff will follow the procedures set out in the '**West Yorkshire Interagency Safeguarding Procedures**' (WYISP) *revised online version 2007*
- 5.2 All Staff will be made aware of these procedures from the time that they commence employment at the Centre, they will also be required to familiarise themselves with the Centre's CP policy. This will be verified in supervision using the form **CP/ST1 (see appendix 1.)**
- 5.3 Any students or other adults who are in a position to identify concerns will be required to refer to the Centre's and online procedures; child protection will also be on the agenda for discussion as part of their training and supervision.
- 5.4 Parents will be informed of Staff responsibilities in relation to child protection and promoting the welfare of children through access to this policy, information contained in the Centre and nursery booklets and at new parents meetings.

**6. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF OR OTHER ADULTS WORKING IN THE CENTRE IN RELATION TO A CHILD.**

- 6.1 It must be recognised that the abuse of children does occur in environments such as nurseries, schools and residential children's establishments. It is essential that everyone who works with children must be aware of this and ensure that procedures and policies are followed and good practice established, in order to protect children.
- 6.2 For children to be safe from abuse of any kind during their time at the Centre, it will be necessary to develop and maintain a culture of openness. This will involve leadership, which places an emphasis on the importance of staff supervision, training, self-development and awareness along with effective communication, clarity and approachability. Staff and parents should be aware of what is and isn't acceptable behaviour and therefore aware of negative practice. (see 10 – Safe Centre, Safe Staff)
- 6.3 The framework for managing cases of allegations of abuse against people who work with children is set out in **Working Together to Safeguard Children: (April 2006)** and **Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education ( DfES January 2007)**The Centre operates safe recruitment procedures in line with these and LA guidelines and will ensure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who work with children. This includes Criminal Bureau checks, anyone who is not prepared to co-operate with these procedures will not be considered for employment.

**No person will be allowed to start work at the Centre until all appropriate checks are undertaken and are satisfactory. (see Recruitment Policy)**

**In all cases the paramount consideration is the protection of the child.**

**All Childcare organisations have a statutory duty under the Protection of Children Act 1999 for the following:**

- **To refer names to the Secretary of State in certain specified circumstances for possible inclusion on the PoCA List.**
- **When recruiting, checks must be made through the Criminal records Bureau to check whether an individual is included on the PoCA List or List 99.**
- **Not to employ a person in a childcare position if that person is included on either of the above lists.**
- **To cease to employ someone in a child care position if it is discovered that the individual is included in either of the above Lists**

6.4 This section is about managing cases of allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that any member of staff (including volunteers) in the Centre has:

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

6.5 There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence;

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- Enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services
- Consideration by the Centre of disciplinary action in respect of the individual

*It may be necessary in some cases to report to the DfES for consideration of including the person on List 99 or consideration by the General Teaching Council about possible sanctions against an individual.*

6.6 It is recognised that anyone who has a complaint made against them will have a range of difficult feelings and anxieties; however, staff members understand that the child's welfare must come first.

## **PROCEDURES**

6.7 It is crucial that any person working in or using the Centre feels confident that any concerns that they may report about a member of staff's or volunteer's conduct towards a child, will be dealt with fairly, consistently and robustly and that they will be taken seriously.

6.8 Allegations must be immediately reported either to a Team Leader or directly to the Head of Centre. Team Leaders receiving any reports from staff (or Centre users) must report to Head of Centre (HOC), who, depending on the nature of the allegation, will decide on the next course of action. In cases of serious allegations the HOC, will take advice from a 'Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Human Resources Personnel. The HOC will also inform the Chair of Governors.

#### 6.9 **Allegations against Team Leaders or Head of Centre**

The same principles apply in these cases; the **child/ren's welfare is paramount**. Allegations against a Team Leader must be reported directly to the HOC and the above will apply.

Where an allegation is against the HOC, the person making the allegation must contact the Chair of the Governing Body (they may need support from the Deputy Head to do this) but the Deputy Head must ensure that any investigation is led by the Chair of Governors, who will seek external advice from those named in 6.8.

#### 6.10 **Supporting those involved**

Depending on the nature of the allegation and discussion/ preliminary investigation, with the LA Designated officer to establish whether it is not demonstrably false or unfounded, the parents of the child/ren should be informed. However in some instances the parents must be informed straight away, for example if the child has been injured and requires medical attention. Parents/carers should be kept informed about the progress of the case and told of any outcomes, e.g. court proceedings or outcome of disciplinary hearings. If the parent's are happy for the child to remain in nursery during any investigation, the Centre staff must not discuss the case with parents, only the best way to support the child. In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there is a criminal prosecution, the Social Care or Police as appropriate should consider what support may be needed.

#### 6.11 **Record Keeping**

A clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations must be made, including details of how it was followed up and resolved, who was involved and any decisions made. This should be kept on the person's confidential personnel file, with a copy to the person concerned. The record should be retained on file until normal retirement age or for a period of 10 years from the date of allegation if that is longer.

#### 6.12 **Information Sharing**

Where there is an allegation that an offence has been committed In the initial consideration, a strategy discussion should take place, with the agencies involved and the employer, all relevant information about the person who is the subject of the allegation and the alleged victim, should be shared.

Wherever possible, the police should obtain consent from the individuals concerned to share statements and evidence they obtain with the employer and, or regulatory bodies, for disciplinary purposes. This should be done as the investigation proceeds rather than after it is concluded, to enable, to enable the police and CPS to share relevant information without delay at the conclusion of their investigation, or any court case.

#### 6.13 **Timescales**

Every effort will be made to resolve cases as quickly as possible, consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. Guidelines suggest that 'it is reasonable to expect that 80% of cases should be resolved within one month,

90% within three months, and all but the most exceptional cases should be completed within 12 months.

#### 6.13 **Suspension**

The possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person will be evaluated by the HOC /Governing Body and the advisors mentioned above, in some cases consideration will be given to an immediate suspension until the case is resolved, however alternative arrangements may also be considered.

#### 6.14 **Monitoring progress**

The Local Authority designated officer will regularly monitor the progress of the case, in liaison with the HOC/GB and other social care colleagues / Police as appropriate.

#### 6.14 **Action on conclusion of a case**

At the conclusion of a case in which the allegation is substantiated the Centre will co-operate with any local Authority review of the case and the circumstances surrounding it, to determine whether any improvements could be made to procedures or practice. If the allegation is determined to be false the Centre will need to consider its actions against the person making the allegation. If the allegation is made by a child, consideration will be given to the child's well being and the reasons why they may have made the allegation and what support they may need, as it could be that they are being abused by someone else.

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In cases where it is decided that the person who has been suspended can return to work, the Head of Centre and person's team leader will discuss the best way to facilitate this. In all cases consideration will be given to the possibility of a phased return to work and mentoring support. Discussions with the suspended person and a senior personnel officer will take place about the next steps.

## 7. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- 7.1 All Staff members have access to training about child protection issues, relevant to their role.
- 7.2 Training courses will be available to all Staff through the Family Services, in-house and external training plans. All Staff will be required to attend basic child protection training. 'The record of Child Protection, Staff development and training' (**appendix 1.**) will be used to ensure that this has been, or is being undertaken. Professional supervision will identify where further relevant training needs to be undertaken.
- 7.3 The Social Work Staff will make themselves available to discuss any child protection concerns with any staff member or other adults who require information, support or guidance.
- 7.4 The Social Work Staff will ensure that any new information on current issues or research etc. will be made available to Staff members.

## 8. CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDING

- 8.1 Staff and other adults who work with the children in the Centre need to fully understand and respect issues of confidentiality, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to protect the child.
- 8.2 Children must not be given a guarantee that disclosures will be kept confidential – this is misleading and dishonest, as any disclosure or suspicion of harm must be referred to the relevant people. Similarly parents should be made aware of the issues, which cannot be kept confidential, e.g. which have implications of harm to a child.
- 8.3 Child protection information will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and if information is held on a computer it will be password protected. (*See data protection & confidentiality policy*)
- 8.4 Where a child is subject of a Child Protection Plan, daily recording will be kept about relevant facts. These recording notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and the child's parents will be informed about it. The Social Workers will complete an initial front sheet advising Staff of the reasons for the CP Plan and what kind of information should be recorded. This information will not be shared with **any other parent**. Information must only be shared with others on a 'need to know basis', however the overriding principle is the safety of children, 'It is assumed that in all instances **where there are**

**concerns about a child's safety it is better to share the information than not'** (WMDC working together to safeguard children). It is the responsibility of the Centre Social Worker to monitor the recording of concerns, review its purpose and amend/update information.

- 8.5 When a child leaves the Nursery the records are kept securely. Guidelines regarding the length of time that these records should be kept are, at the time of writing not available.
- 8.6 Where identical child protection records are kept by two agencies, e.g. Social Care and the Centre, the Centre will destroy their copies.
- 8.7 Students who are on placement at the Centre for very short periods or who are work experience students, will not be directly involved in the daily recording, however they will be encouraged to share comments about any relevant observations they have made.
- 8.8 Any reports compiled in relation to a child or family will be shared only on a 'need to know' basis (See 8.4)
- 8.9 Parent representatives will be given information about the importance of confidentiality when they are appointed to the role. Parents in general are made aware of issues around confidentiality and child protection during home visits by family workers and in new parents meetings.

- 8.10 Staff will be made aware that any breaches of confidentiality would be viewed very seriously and dealt with through the departmental disciplinary procedures, (***apart from cases where any breaches represent a legitimate attempt to safeguard a child***).

## 9. SUPPORTING CHILDREN

- 9.1 The Centre Staff recognise that children who have been abused or have witnessed violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth or to view the world in a positive way. Whilst in Nursery their behaviour may be challenging and difficult to handle or they may exhibit other behaviours, such as sexualised behaviour, which the adults around them may feel uncomfortable with and struggle to understand.
- 9.2 It is recognised that all children need to experience a sensitive and consistent approach; this is even more crucial in cases where children are having difficulties and struggling to understand traumatic events.
- 9.3 The Centre Staff will support these children through:
- A curriculum which encourages self-esteem and confidence
  - Promoting a positive, supportive and secure environment, which demonstrates a respect and value for children and their rights.
  - A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays.

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- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's interests to do so.

9.4 It is recognised that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Staff who work in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

9.5 It must also be recognised that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

9.6 This policy should be considered alongside the other related Centre policies.

For example:

Behaviour Policy

Inclusion Policy

Health and Safety

Family Support

Guidance for Toileting

## **10. SAFE CENTRE, SAFE STAFF**

- 10.1 The abuse of children can arouse many difficult feelings for staff and it should be recognised that staff can be at different stages in their understanding and awareness. The Management of the Centre will ensure that members of staff are supported through any difficulties they may have, by providing both regular formal supervision and informal support if required, and training and development opportunities.
- 10.2 The staff team is aware that young children will need physical comfort at times. It would be inappropriate to deny young children this if they require it. However any physical contact should be 'child led' and appropriate to the child's needs, e.g. a child seeking comfort after a fall, distressed on separation from parent, ill or distressed over some other incident. No member of staff should ever seek comfort from a child to meet their own needs. Comfort should be in the form of hugs, holding hands, sitting a child on the knee. For a variety of reasons, some children may find being touched uncomfortable or distressing. It is important for staff to be sensitive to a child's physical reaction and to act appropriately.
- 10.3 Staff members need to be aware that where children have been sexually abused, they may exhibit sexualised forms of behaviour, e.g. seeking overly familiar physical contact with children and adults, excessive masturbation. Staff will need to be very sensitive to the needs of all the children in this

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situation and will receive training and support in order to handle any incident appropriately.

10.4 In relation to the above, staff need to ensure that they do not place themselves in vulnerable situations. It must also be recognised that children are abused in Institutions, e.g. schools, nurseries, residential establishments etc. To address both the vulnerability of staff and children, the Centre will operate the following procedures: (See 6)

- When children need their clothes changing due to them soiling, wetting or becoming wet or dirty through falling or being involved in messy play, the staff will ensure that another member of staff knows that they are about to undertake the task.
- The door to the bathroom/ toilet will not be locked and should be kept slightly ajar, whilst preserving the child's privacy.
- A list of all the children's names will be situated in the Nursery changing area which will indicate any intimate task carried out on a daily basis. **(Appendix 2)** Staff will tick this under the appropriate name and task and initial it. The Social Work Co-ordinator or Head of Centre will monitor the use of this form. Parents/carers will be informed when a child has had to be changed.

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- Occasionally children complain of soreness or pain in genital areas, which requires immediate attention, if this occurs it must be recorded on the above sheet and the child's parent informed. No cream should be applied without first seeking the Parent/carer's permission.
  
- If Staff discovers marks or bruising on a child, they should refer this to the CP link teacher who will liaise with Centre Social Worker or Head of Centre, so that appropriate action can be taken.
  
- Volunteers in the nursery will be police checked. They will also be made aware of their role and responsibilities in relation to the children, i.e. they will not take sole charge of individual children, and this includes taking the children out of the Centre or into rooms on their own. Volunteers will not change children's clothes or nappies. Volunteers will not have access to children's personal information or files.
  
- In line with departmental policy, all staff will hold, or be working towards a professional qualification and will be CRB checked. The recruitment process will include the checking of PoCA List and List 99, references and qualifications.

**Use of photographs**

- Written permission must be sought from parents to take and store any photographs for any purpose.
  
- Photographs of children should only be taken for legitimate Centre/ school use & must only be taken and stored on Centre camera and ICT equipment

- Personal mobile phones must not be used by staff to take photographs of children.
- Mobile phones are not allowed in children's areas by parents or employees.

**(see Electronic Equipment Policy)**

#### 10.5 Unexplained absences

In cases where there are welfare concerns about a child and that child is not brought to nursery for a period longer than a week, with no reasonable explanation, the Centre staff will initially try to contact the family by telephone. If unsuccessful; a home visit will be made. If it is clear that the family no longer live at the address or contact can't be made, the Centre staff will make contact with the family's health visitor or social worker. (If the family have a social worker contact should be made within 2 days of unexplained absence to inform them of the absence)

#### 10.6 Outreach work

The Centre's Family Support Workers see families both in the Centre and in the families own homes. Many of the families that they visit have vulnerabilities / complex difficulties, and some may have children who are subject to a **Child Protection Plan**. The support workers must be aware of and understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding of children and ensure that they;

- are honest & open with families about their role and duties with regard to the reporting of any concerns and the fact that the child's welfare is of paramount importance,
- are alert to the signs and symptoms of 'harm' in all its forms,
- bring any concerns to the attention of their line manager immediately
- follow the policies and procedures of the LA and Centre

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See Section 4 – Roles and Responsibilities.

See also Staff Safety & Security Policy.

Signed-----Chair of Governors

Signed-----Head of Centre

Signed: -----CP Governor

**This policy will be reviewed annually**

**All staff members will be expected to read this policy and discuss with line manager if they do not fully understand any part of it.**

**IMPORTANT CONTACTS**

**The Castle Children's Centre, 255 Barnsley Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire**

**WF1 5NU**

**01924 303211**

**[headteacher@castlecc.wakefield.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@castlecc.wakefield.sch.uk)**

**Childcare Manager: Tracy Slater**

**[tracy@castlecc.wakefield.sch.uk](mailto:tracy@castlecc.wakefield.sch.uk)**

**Social Care Direct**

**Tel. 0845 8503503 (24 hour number)**

**Police**

**Tel. 0845 6060606 (child protection)**

**Designated Centre CP Workers:**

**Head of Centre –Kathy Stevens\_**

**Named CP Governor- Rachel Holmes**

**Snr Social Worker – Mark Duffy**

**Nursery Link Teacher – Joanne Whyte**

**Designated local authority CP contact**

**Rachel Holmes (LADO)**

**Tel. 01977 727044**

## How to tell if a Child is being Abused

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It is important that every person working with children are alert to the possibility that a child may have been abused and know how to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse.

There are 4 main types of abuse and all staff are trained in how to identify each one. They are fully aware of what signs/symptoms to look for and how they relate to each type of abuse.

Here is a brief description of each one:

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse involves hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, throwing, suffocating or anything else that causes physical harm to a child.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse involves the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, which could cause long lasting ill effects on the child's emotional development. It can involve telling a child they are worthless or unloved or causing the child to feel frightened or in danger (for instance through witnessing violence) or exploiting or corrupting a child.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves enticing or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities (Whether or not the child is aware of what is happening) or encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. This can include both physical and non- physical contact. It may involve a child looking at or taking part in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities.

### **Neglect**

Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physiological needs, which may result in damage to the child's health and development. It can involve failing to provide food, clothing or accommodation or failing to get medical help when needed.

It is recognised that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Staff who work in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

It must also be recognised that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, or a parent/carer is experiencing mental illness or has a learning disability, children may be vulnerable and families may need additional support or protection.

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### **Definition of Significant Harm and Child in Need**

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Under the Children Act 1989 a child is considered to be in need if their health or development will be impaired without the provision of services. Such services can be provided by Children's Social Care but often services can be provided by a range of agencies working together to identify and meet a child's needs.

Significant harm is the threshold which determines the need for statutory intervention in a child's life by Children's Social Care. The Local Authority has a duty to make enquiries to inform future plans where it believes a child is suffering or likely to suffer from significant harm. This is under Section 47 of the Children Act and are known as Section 47 enquiries. All agencies have a duty to share information about the child with Children's Social Care when such enquiries are being made.

To determine whether or not harm is significant is difficult to assess but would include such things as the severity, frequency and duration of the harm and the impact this is likely to have on the child's health and development.

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## FRAMEWORK - SAFEGUARDING FLOWCHART



