



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

A Basic Awareness Workbook

By working through this booklet you will learn –

- How to recognise and respond to concerns about a child;
- How to appreciate your own role and that of others;
- How to communicate and act appropriately within national/local guidance to safeguard children;
- A basic awareness of legislation and guidance underpinning Child Protection processes;
- What to do if you have concerns about a child;
- What will happen once concerns have been referred.

Take your time to work through the booklet, if you have no experience it will be useful to go through the booklet with your line manager or mentor. Answer the questions by referring to the information on the surrounding pages.

When you have finished, your manager will then discuss your answers with you, and will inform LSCB Workforce Development when you have completed your training.

The topics discussed on the next few pages are sensitive, but they are necessary to ensure you receive a full understanding of the topic and are not meant to purposely offend.

Welcome to the 'Safeguarding children' work booklet

Ensuring that children are safe is of very high priority

Safeguarding children is the responsibility of any member of staff who through their role may come in contact with children, young people and their families, consequently they are required to understand what abuse and neglect is and what to do if they are worried about a child.

"Everybody who works or has contact with children, parents and other adults in contact with children should be able to recognise and know how to act upon evidence that a child's health or development is or may be being impaired. Especially when they are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm."

(Government publication - Working together to safeguard children 2010)

As you work through this booklet, you will become more familiar with common words and terms used in safeguarding and you will become more aware of your responsibilities.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND ITS LINK TO SAFEGUARDING

Understanding normal child development is important in order to gain an awareness of the impact that abuse can have on a child's growth and the potential impact that maltreatment can have upon a child.

Each child is an individual in a relationship to parents, wider family, school, friends, neighbourhood, society and culture.

Research into the needs of children suggests that all children need the following for healthy development –

- **Basic care – food, shelter, health**
- **Ensuring safety – supervision, household risk and parental responsibility**
- **Emotional warmth – love and affection, listening**
- **Stimulation – play, education and friendships**
- **Guidance and boundaries – routines and consequences**
- **Stability – consistent parenting**

There are two universal factors about child development:

- As children grow and assuming they have been given appropriate parenting and support from others, their ability and confidence in different areas of development will change

- For all children development will be individual, all children will gain ability in certain developmental tasks in the same order but not necessarily at the same time What this tells us is that children need support and guidance to reach their milestones, each child is an individual with their own potential.

Traumatic events such as abuse or ill treatment can impact upon a child's development. Research informs us that children can recover from abuse or other negative experiences and the support they receive is essential to this as well as the seriousness of the harm they suffered and the duration it went on for.

Early identification of risk and intervention tells us that children can recover from abuse and go on to reach their full potential.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

In order to understand how to keep children safe, it is important to understand some of the terms that we will be using in this booklet.

First of all, write down your thoughts in the box below –

What does safeguarding mean to you?

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from ill treatment
- Preventing children suffering ill health or not reaching their full potential

Ensuring children are safe and cared for

Safeguarding covers a wide array of levels as shown below:

<p style="text-align: center;">Universal Safeguarding</p> <p>Working to keep all children and young people safe and creating safe environments for all children</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Targeted Safeguarding</p> <p>Some groups of children are more at risk than others and it is important to target policies and services to these groups to help keep them safe from harm</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Specialist Safeguarding</p> <p>Unfortunately, no matter what we do, there will always be some children and young people who suffer harm. We need to respond quickly and appropriately when this happens – supporting children and dealing with those who harm them.</p>

As part of safeguarding you also need to consider the phrase 'child protection'.

What does Child Protection mean to you?

Child protection can be defined as:

“Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.” (Working Together 1.23)

The Children Act 1989 defines significant harm as:

- HARM – Ill treatment or impairment of health or development where Health means or Mental or Physical health and Development means Social, Emotional, Physical, Behavioural
- SIGNIFICANT – means that it is considerable and noteworthy, i.e. that it is likely to have serious or lasting effects

This could also include the impairment of a child's development as a result of witnessing the ill treatment of another person, for example in circumstances of domestic abuse.

RECOGNISING THE SIGNS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

There are four categories of abuse –

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect

Before we start to work through this section, it is important to note, and remember that –

1) Child abuse is never the child's fault

2) Child abuse can go unnoticed

We are going to look at the different categories of child abuse and neglect

Physical Abuse

What do you think physical abuse would include?

You may have put comments similar to –

- Hurting, injuring (hitting, shaking, biting, burning)
- Alcohol/drugs/poison
- Suffocation/drowning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child
- Inappropriate use or lack of medication
- Parents/carers fabricating symptoms or
- Parent or caregiver deliberately inducing illness in a child

Childhood involves children and young people living active lifestyles and they can often end up with scratches and bruises from explained accidental injuries.

Not all injuries to children are visible

Sexual Abuse

What does sexual abuse mean to you and what do you think it may involve?

You may have put comments similar to this definition:

“Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or 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 or non-penetrative acts.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. “

Examples of what this might be are –

Familial Sexual Abuse (Incest)	sexual intercourse between any family member or any person in a position of trust/care/custody and control
Paedophilia	sexual interest in pre-pubescent children
Pornography	sexually explicit images, films or other materials
Exploitation	engaging into sexual activities, receiving of gifts or attention in order to engage a child’s interest in sexual activities
Sexual Activity	can involve penetration, sexual touching or engaging in other sexual activities
Rape	an assault by a person involving sexual intercourse without the other person’s consent

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 can take numerous forms –

- **Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or**
- **Valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.**
- **Causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, for example**
- **By witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied.**
- **The exploitation or corruption of children**
- **Putting age or developmentally inappropriate expectations onto a child**
- **Overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning**
- **Preventing the child participating in normal social interaction**
- **Being shouted at and/or taunted**
- **Racial abuse**
- **Constant negative criticism**

This list is not exhaustive

Neglect

What does neglect mean to you?

Neglect can be defined as –

“The persistent failing to meet a child’s basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.”

Here are some examples of neglectful behaviour by parents.

- Misuse of drugs/alcohol including during pregnancy
- Leaving a child / children alone / unsupervised
- Failure to meet basic needs
- Abandonment / exclusion from home
- Denial of love / affection / attention
- Risk of injury
- Failure to seek medical care / treatment
- Being unresponsive to a child’s emotional needs

Other neglectful behaviours might be –

- Leaving children unsupervised or in the care of inappropriate others
- Failure to protect from exposure to harm or danger
- Failure to provide adequate home conditions
 - lack of food, warmth, care routines, dirty clothes, bedding
 - lack of essential amenities - gas, electricity, water
 - Failure to attend to a child’s physical/medical needs
 - Untreated conditions, lack of immunisations, poor dental/optical care, nappy rash
 - Failure to attend to a child’s developmental needs
 - non-school attendance, lack of stimulation/peer group socialisation

Recognising and Reporting Abuse

Having identified abuse of a child what do you think you should do?

What signs might lead you to think that a child may be at risk of abuse or neglect?

- **Information actually given to you by the child**
- **Unexplained bruising or injury which causes suspicion**
- **The child's behaviour is concerning**
- **A child loses weight or looks unkempt**
- **Something a child or young person has said that causes concern**
- **Frequent accidents or injuries can sometimes indicate neglect**
- **They have contact with someone known to pose a risk to children**
- **The parent's behaviour before the birth of the child, for example misuse of alcohol**

There are also many reasons why a child may not disclose information to you

- **Direct Threats**
- **Fear of punishment**
- **Guilt and Shame**
- **Limited/poor communication skills/speech and language; child may have additional complex needs**
- **Not appreciating an abusive situation**
- **No-one listening**
- **Implications of telling – family break up etc**
- **Abuse considered to be a normal response**
- **Lack of trust**
- **Do not understand that they are a victim of abuse eg. CSE**

If a child does decide to talk to you about what is happening to them follow these guidelines:

ALWAYS Stay calm	NEVER Ask leading questions
ALWAYS Listen carefully and accept what is being said to you	NEVER Put words into the child's mouth
ALWAYS Reassure the child that he/she is not to blame	NEVER Rush into details that may be inappropriate – its not your job to investigate
ALWAYS Tell the child that you will need to tell someone else	NEVER Promise to keep it a secret
ALWAYS Make some notes as soon as possible on what was said to you – record accurately using the exact words that the child did	NEVER Take sole responsibility – you must consult someone else in order to protect the child and support yourself
ALWAYS Seek advice about your concerns from your line manager/child protection person	NEVER Delay in reporting
ALWAYS Refer to the correct people (could include your line manager and/or the police)	<u>NEVER DO NOTHING</u>
ALWAYS Remember the safety of the child takes precedence over the needs to maintain confidentiality	
ALWAYS Follow your referral up in writing within 48 hours	

So, who should you contact if you believe a child is at risk of abuse or neglect?

If you believe that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, then you should always refer his or her concerns to your manager and then Children's Social Care or the Police

It is the responsibility of your organisations safeguarding lead or designated person, to refer to children's social care. However if you are unable to contact your safeguarding lead, you can contact child protection services on the following numbers.

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Duty Team: 01254 666400

Out of Hours: 01254 587547 or the Police

Follow your referral up in writing within 48 hours

Make sure the information is:

- Clear
- Legible
- Factual
- Relevant

Before you make your referral, make sure that you have all the information you need ready:-

- **Child's name, date of birth, address**
- **What have you seen, been told**
- **What is the nature of the harm**
- **What action do you think is necessary to safeguard the child?**
- **Does the child or family know about the referral?**

Children's' Social Care will clarify with you:

- **The nature of concerns**
- **How and why the concerns have arisen**
- **What appear to be the needs of the child and family**
- **Whether there are concerns about significant harm**
- **Whether the child/ren may need urgent action to make them safe from harm**

OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

**Engage (Tackling sexual exploitation of young people in the Blackburn
with Darwen area) 01254 56145**

**WISH Centre (Women's Information and Self Help Centre)
01254 260465**

EVOLVE (adult substance misuse service) 01254 297050

**Brook (free and confidential sexual health advice and contraception to
young people) 01254 268700**

**CAFCASS (Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
0844 3531830**

This is the end of the Safeguarding Children Workbook

Please sign below to indicate you have completed the Workbook and keep it safe.

Name:

Job Title:

Line Manager:

Date: