

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN



UK Electronics
Skills Foundation

UK Electronics Skills Foundation (UKESF)

VERSION NUMBER: 3.0

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 2022

POLICY

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – and in particular protecting them from significant harm – depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, children's social care and possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services.

For those children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote welfare of the child(ren) and – where necessary – to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children. Everyone should:

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans; and
- work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

Definitions

A child is defined in law (Children Act 1989) as any person who is up to the age of 18 years.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Protecting any child from assault by other children;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Taking action to enable children to have the best outcomes.

Staff Awareness

All UKESF staff will be made aware of this policy as part of their initial induction process and, if deemed necessary, will be supported to attend appropriate training courses.

Reviewing the Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every year, this will include checking telephone numbers, accuracy of personnel details and any updates required by a change in local or national policy.

Procedures

What to do if you have Concerns about a Child

You may have concerns about a child because of something you have seen or heard, or a child may choose to disclose something to you. If a child discloses information to you, you should:

- Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information and refer to Children's Social Care Services.
- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said.
- Reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises you may not be able to keep, eg: *'Everything will be alright now'*, *'You'll never have to see that person again'*.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, *'You're not to blame'*.
- Do not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- Do not ask leading questions, ask open questions such as *'Anything else to tell me?'*
- Do not ask the child to repeat the information for another member of staff.
- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- Take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards.
- Record the date, time, place, any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase).
- Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Whatever the nature of your concerns, discuss them with the UKESF's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). See the diagram on the next page for the process to follow.

UKESF DSL: Stew Edmondson, CEO, UKESF – call 07894 899544 or email stewart.edmondson@ukesf.org

If you still have concerns, you or the DSL should refer to:

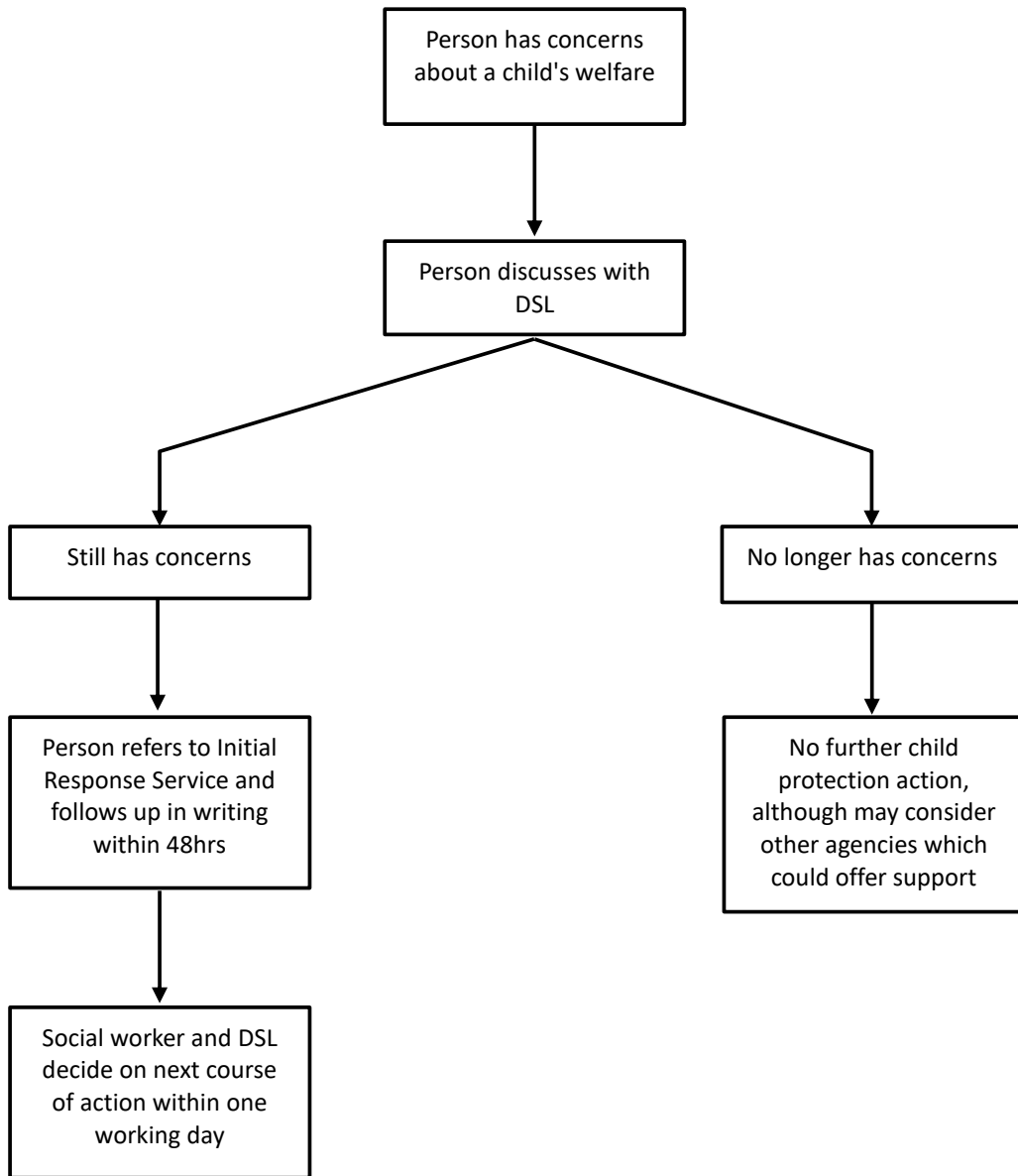
- Local police, or call 999
- The local council's Children's Services
- NSPCC Helpline: 0800 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children)
- ChildLine: 0800 1111

What information will you need when making a referral?

You will be asked to provide as much information as possible. Such as the child's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents. Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the call.

You should follow up the verbal referral in writing, within 48hrs.

Process Chart Where There Are Concerns About A Child's Welfare



Allegations Involving a Members of Staff/Volunteer

The UKESF is committed to having effective recruitment and human resources procedures, including checking all staff and volunteers to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people. Where appropriate, key staff involved in recruitment processes will undertake safer recruitment training.

However, there may still be occasions when there is an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer. Allegations against those who work with children, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, cover a wide range of circumstances and must be taken seriously. All reports of allegations must be submitted within one working day to Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way which has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child in a way which indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children.

The allegations may relate to the person's behaviour at work, at home or in another setting.

The DSL will discuss the matter to determine what steps should be taken and, where necessary, obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded, whether a referral is required and/or whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

Some allegations will be so serious as to require immediate referral to the police or local council's Children's Services, but common sense and judgement must be applied in reaching a decision about what action to take. If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the DSL will immediately refer the matter.

Some allegations may be less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by Children's Services. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation. Consequently, the DSL should be informed of all allegations that come to the employer's attention and appear to come within the scope of this procedure so that they can consult the police or Children's Services as appropriate.

Where such allegations are made, consideration must be given to the following three strands:

- 1) The police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- 2) Enquiries and assessment by Children's Services as to whether the child is need of protection or services;
- 3) Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

Roles & Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

The Board has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding. The Board will:

- Receive appropriate training to understand their responsibility for safeguarding as a Board of Trustees.
- Support the CEO/DSL in assessing and managing risk.
- Ensure safeguarding policies, procedures and reporting are in place.
- Receive and review an annual report on safeguarding from the CEO/DSL.
- Promote at Board level a culture and environment whereby all are enabled to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) & Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The CEO/DSL, Stew Edmondson, has day-to-day responsibility for safeguarding and will lead on the development and implementation of safeguarding policy and related procedures, with the support of the Board. The CEO/DSL will ensure that:

- There is a clear line of accountability for the provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- There are arrangements in place which set out clearly the process for sharing information with other professionals.
- There are procedures in place for safe recruitment and vetting processes and for making referrals to the DBS check, etc.
- The Board receives an annual update on safeguarding.
- Serious safeguarding incidents are reported to the charity commission.
- There is a process in place for whistleblowing.