

Lancashire Young Carers' Safeguarding Procedures



Lancashire County Council

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PART 1

Introduction

The key features of an effective system to safeguard children were identified by the governments response to the Victoria Climbié inquiry report '[Keeping Children safe](#)' and subsequent Joint Chief inspectors report '[Safeguarding Children](#)' (July 2005). These informed the Green Paper '[Every Child Matters and the Children Act \(2004\)](#)', in particular the plans for integrating services around the needs of children through the creation of Childrens Trusts, the requirement for local authorities to set up Local safeguarding Children Boards and the new duty on all agencies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. '[The Every Child Matters: Change for Children](#)' programme is oriented around the five outcomes that are key to children and young people's wellbeing:

Stay Safe
Be healthy
Enjoy and achieve
Make a positive contribution
Achieve economic wellbeing

Whilst it is recognised that people who work with children have a responsibility to improving all five outcomes, the emphasis from Safeguarding would be on the stay safe and be healthy outcomes.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is crucial in any role that is directly or indirectly committed to meeting the needs of children.

What is safeguarding?

'[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)' (2006) defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable children to have optimum life chances such that they can enter adulthood successfully.

Effective child protection is essential as part of the wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However all agencies and individuals should aim proactively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced. The task is not 'simply' oriented around responses to suspected or alleged abuse, although that remains crucial of course; instead we must think holistically and in terms of what we deliver, *continually*, *proactively* and *preventatively* in order

to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. It must be a common thread which runs through every team, service, agency or organisation across the county that comes into contact with children, Young People and vulnerable adults, whichever capacity and under whatever circumstances.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006) sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is addressed to practitioners and front line managers who have particular responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and to senior and operational managers. It is the foundation upon which Lancashire's Safeguarding Children procedures were developed which provides the framework within which professionals work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The key principles are:

- An Integrated approach to safeguarding
- Working together
- Shared responsibility

Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board recognises that safeguarding and promoting that welfare of children is a shared responsibility which requires joint effective working and partnership between all agencies, professionals, children and young people, parents and carers and the wider community.

The procedures outlined below provide a clear link to the overarching Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures (March 2007).

It is noted in the Service Level Agreements for LCC funded services to young carers that any related procedures must be consistent with them.

The policies and procedures set out in this document should be followed by all staff and volunteers and students working throughout young carers service settings.

This document sets out the roles and responsibilities of all Young Carers Staff in relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection and must be read in conjunction with [Lancashire Safeguarding Children Children's board \(LSCB\) 'Safeguarding Children's Procedures.'](#) (2006)

Mission Statement

Children's safety and wellbeing is central to all the work undertaken in the Lancashire Young Carers projects. Staff , volunteers and students working within the setting will be aware of the above and will be given training and encouraged to develop skills to enable them to respond appropriately to any situation where a child may be a at risk. Staff within the Young Carers projects strive to work in partnership with families as far as is possible and in the best interest of the child. However, the safety and welfare of children and young people will be of paramount consideration at all times. We have a duty

to protect children and will pass on any concerns to the appropriate agencies without delay.

Ethos, Underpinning Legislation and Guidance

1. There are two main aspects to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
 - i) Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that risk of harm to children's welfare and safety are minimised; and
 - ii) ensuring that there are arrangements in place to enable appropriate action to be taken in order to address concerns.
2. The policy and procedures set out in this document are based on the key principles laid down by 'Working Together to Safeguard Children': A Guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' (Dept of Health, 2006) and Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board's Safeguarding Children's procedures (2006).
3. In accordance with the [United Nations Convention on the rights of the child](#), this Young Carers service believes that every child has a right to be loved and cared for and to be safe and well, to be offered a good standard of education, to be protected from exploitation and to have opportunities for rest and play (1991). Similarly, all children have the same rights and the same value, regardless of age, race, culture, gender, disability, or social/economic background.
4. [The 1989 Children Act](#) places a legal duty on all Children's social care services to make enquiries if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child in their area is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, to enable them to decide whether to take any action in order to safeguard or promote the child's welfare.
5. The welfare of children is a responsibility of this service whilst working in partnership with other agencies, the voluntary sector, and service users and carers. There is a duty to co-operate with enquiries into whether or not a child is at risk of significant harm.

Deleted: Central Tenets

Central Tenets Undertakings and Acknowledgments

This policy and procedural document aims to provide a framework for use by all of the Young Carers staff including partnership, agency and seconded staff and volunteers to guide and assist them in dealing with child protection issues. This policy;

- Seeks to clarify this Young Carer's service position in relation to Lancashire's multi agency child protection system and structure.
- Underlines the fact that it is not the responsibility of this service to investigate concerns or allegations relating to child abuse or

protection, which is the role of the Children's Social Care Services and / or the police (where a crime may have been committed). The role of this service is to refer such concerns to the appropriate agency.

- Acknowledges that effective safeguarding and child protection requires a co-ordinated approach. This service and its partners will work together in implementing this child protection policy and procedures, in keeping with Lancashire Safeguarding Children's board's 'Safeguarding Children procedures'.
- Recognises that 'child abuse' is an emotive and disturbing subject. However, it is a reality and those whose work brings them into regular contact with children need information and practical guidance to ensure that they are able to recognise possible signs and symptoms of abuse and deal appropriately with their concerns.
- Everyone working within this service should have a basic level of awareness about how to protect children from harm, safeguard and promote their welfare.
- Acknowledges that work with families, and particularly in the context of child protection which entails making difficult professional judgments, can be distressing and stressful.
- Undertakes to ensure that all staff and volunteers in this setting will have access to advice and support, from their peers and line managers. Supervision will be used to promote good practice and to offer one to one support.
- Undertakes to ensure that the training and developmental needs of staff and volunteers are met in respect of safeguarding and child protection
- Nominated person or supervisors will ensure the consistent implementation of policy, procedures and practice.
- All staff and volunteers will be given a copy of the Lancashire Young Carers Child Protection procedures as part of their induction which they have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with and discuss any lack of understanding with their manager.

PART 2

The Lancashire Young Carers Child Protection Policies are consistent with Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board Policies and procedures (LSCB) 'Safeguarding Children Procedures' (2006)

All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves with the LSCB 'Safeguarding procedures which need to be understood alongside Lancashire Young Carers Child Protection policies and procedures.

What you should and shouldn't do if you are concerned about the welfare or safety of a child on your database

Staff or volunteers who are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child on the Young Carers database should **never**.

- Do Nothing
- Assume that another agency or professional will act or is acting;
- Fail to discuss concerns with a supervisor or manager.
- Attempt to resolve the matter themselves.

Staff or volunteers should **always**

- Seek appropriate advice and support;
- Discuss concerns with a supervisor/ manager, whom should always be available.
- Keep written records including times and dates.
- Follow flowchart at Appendix one for clear guidance to the referral process.

Out Of Hours Guidance

The services offered by the Young Carers Projects do not take place solely within the normally accepted office hours of 9-5, Monday to Friday. Activities, outings and groups take place in out of school hours i.e. late afternoon evenings and in some cases weekends and overnight stays are included as in a residential activity.

Guidelines are needed for workers who may have concerns regarding a child's welfare when the normal statutory provision is unavailable.

If any worker becomes aware of a child protection concern where immediate risk of significant harm is suspected, they should contact the Children's Social Carer Service's emergency Duty Team (EDT). The team operates evenings, weekends and bank holidays.

The contact no is 0845 6021043 fax number 01772 536701. The decision on the most appropriate course of action rests with the EDT.

Data Protection and Information sharing

Personal Information about children and families held by professionals and agencies is subject to a legal duty of confidentiality and should not normally be disclosed without the consent of the family. However, the right to confidentiality and respect for private and family life (Article 8, Human Rights Act) is not absolute.

Professionals should be clear that they have a professional duty to share information with appropriate agencies and professionals wherever they believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. However, due regard must always be given to the relevant legislation which relates to maintaining records and sharing information.

In circumstances where possible information sharing dilemmas exist, The following points will always need to be considered prior to sharing confidential/sensitive personal information without consent.

- The facts must be assessed in each individual case.
- The likelihood and evidence of (likely) significant harm.
- Is sharing information in the interest of the child/is there an overriding public interest
- Should consent be sought and if not why not?
- How much information is it necessary to share?
- Does the intended recipient 'need to know'? i.e. do they have an 'appropriate interest' to receive this information?
- Is there a pressing need to disclose and why?

Child Protection Referrals and Informing Parents of the Intention to Refer

The consent of a parent/carer is not required in order to make a child protection referral. However, under most circumstances, parents should be informed that one is to be made. The reasons for not informing parents are:

- i. Because to do so may increase the risk of significant harm (eg.fabricated or induced illness).
- ii. May impede and investigation (e.g. Suspected sexual abuse in the family)
- iii. Because to do so would cause undue delay which would not be in the child's best interest.

Where it is strongly believed that the safety of a staff member or volunteer or student's safety would be compromised by informing the parents of the intention to refer, this should be made clear to the Children's Social Care Services during the initial telephone discussion/referral and reiterated via the MAARF/CAF which should follow (within 48 hrs).

Allegations against, Staff, Volunteers, Students or any other adult who has a role within the project.

The vast majority of adults who work with children and young people act professionally, and seek to provide a safe and supportive environment in which to promote their wellbeing and secure the best outcomes for children, young people and their families. It is recognised that the achievement of these outcomes is not always straightforward. (see guidance to safe working practices.)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006 Appendix 5) And LSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures (Appendix H) provide detailed guidance on the procedure for handling allegations against people who work with children. It is important that everyone who works with children understands that the framework for managing cases set out in this guidance applies to a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Inappropriate behaviour may occur along a continuum and may not necessarily be 'abusive' in child protection terms or constitute a criminal offence.

It also addresses case of allegations that might indicate that s/he is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position or in any capacity. It should be used in all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to the child; or,
- behaved in a way the indicates that s/he is unsuitable to work with children

There may be up to 3 strands in the consideration of an allegation:-

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services;
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

All allegations against adults involved in the service in any capacity will be referred to the person's employer, Children's Social Care Services, and to the host organisation's management board. for initial consideration with regard to what further action if any is required, by whom and in what timescale, in line with Working Together To Safeguard Children (2006) and the LSCB 'Safeguarding Children Procedures'.

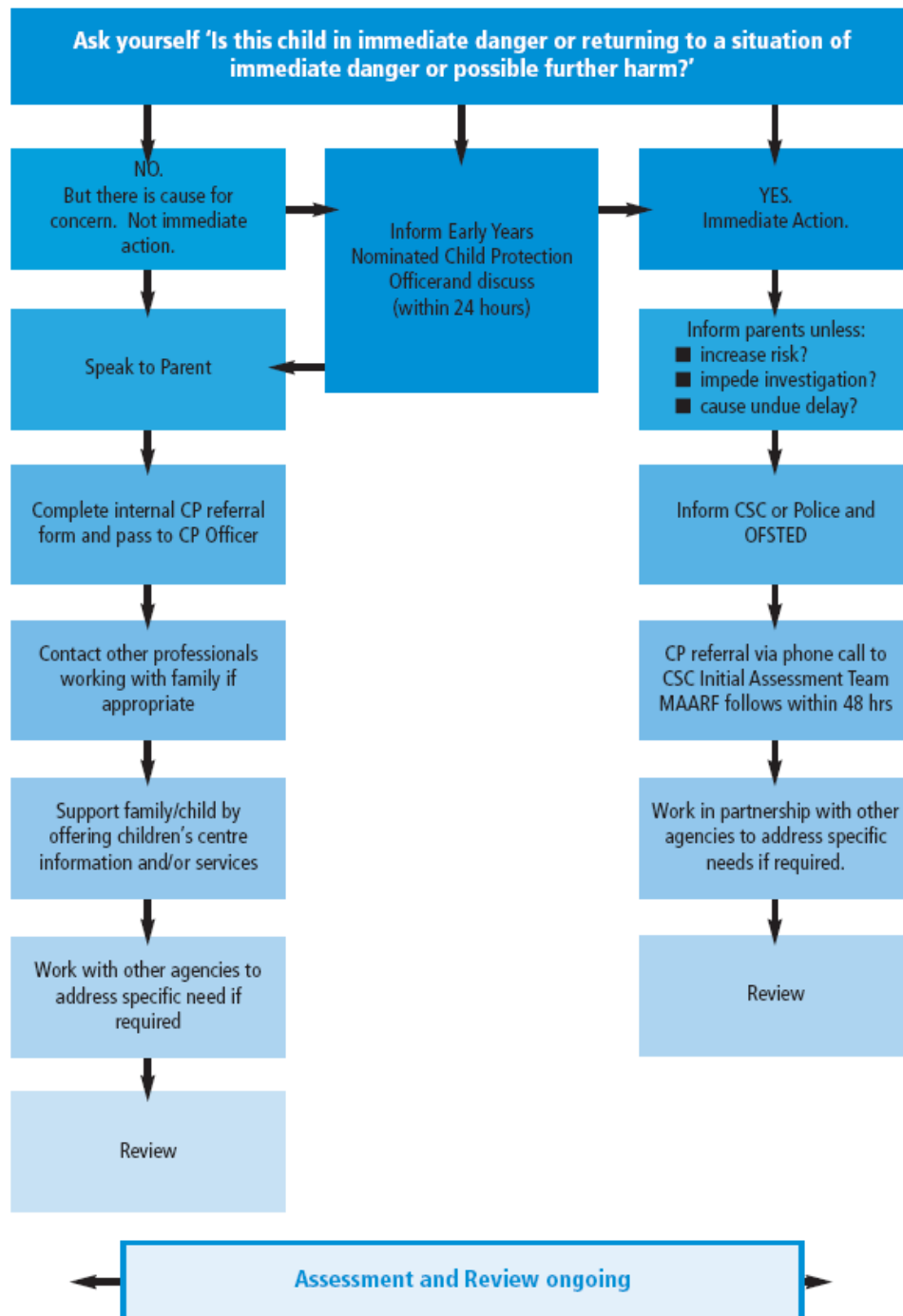
Consideration will need to be given to a range of factors at this stage (, and not least the provision of information, advice and support to the subject of the allegation).

Any 'internal' investigation or disciplinary process will be held in abeyance pending a decision from Children's Social Care Services and /or the police regarding any child protection and /or criminal investigative action it is necessary to undertake and where appropriate, pending the outcome of any such investigations. A professionals strategy meeting may be convened under these circumstances, as per the LSCB Procedures, Management of Allegation Against Professionals and the manager of the project must attend.

A decision to suspend should not be taken lightly; suspension under these circumstances and is without prejudice and is not in itself a disciplinary sanction. Disciplinary processes will be clearly separate from child protection enquiries and criminal investigations.

In respect of all allegations, an accurate written record/chronology must be maintained by the manager of the host organisation, including the nature of the concern, the time ,date, reporting of it, any contemporaneous records, and any follow up action points.

Appendix 1: Handling Concerns and Making Referrals



Appendix 2: Significant Harm and Risk Assessment Checklist

There are no absolute criteria upon which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm; sometimes a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm. More often however, significant harm is a combination of events, both acute and long standing which interrupt, change or damage a child's physical and /or psychological development.

a) Children Act Guidance and Definitions

Within the Children Act 1989, the following guidance is offered;

Significance is not defined within the Children Act although it is to be measured 'in terms of:

- A child's health and development; and
- That which can be expected of a similar child
- **'Harm'** means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development;
- **'Development'** means physical, intellectual, social ,emotional or behavioural development;
- **'Health'** means physical or mental health; and
- **'Ill Treatment'** includes sexual abuse and forms of treatment that are not physical, including for example, impairment suffered from seeing the ill treatment of another.

b) To begin with, in order to understand and establish significant harm, it is necessary to consider:

- The child's development within the context of the family and wider social environment;
- Any special needs and how they impact at all levels(child and family)
- The nature of any harm and it's likely impact upon the child's health and development;
- The adequacy of parental care.

c) More specifically, how does the following contextual information shape your professional judgement about this situation?

- Age of child (developmental stage /,vulnerability, abilities)
- The 'act(s)'described or referred to ,what is being described ?Possible criminal act/investigation required(10 is the age of criminal responsibility, eg if the concern relates to the actions of one child against another)
- Severity of ill treatment?

- Degree and extent of physical harm?
- Duration and frequency?
- Extent and degree of premeditation?
- Degree of threat or coercion?
- Immediate risk?
- Nature and evidence of risk (when and how is the child at risk?)
- Impact upon the child's health and development?
- What am I being asked to do and what am I required to do in response to this information/

Risk Assessment 'Checklist'

- Does/could the suspected harm meet the LSCB definition of abuse?
- Are there cultural, linguistic or disability issues?
- Am I wrongly attributing something to impairment?
- Does the chronology indicate any possible patterns which could /do impact upon the level of risk?
- Are any injuries or incidents, acute, cumulative, episodic?
- Did any injuries result from spontaneous action, neglect, or intent?
- Are explanations consistent with/injuries /behaviour?
- Severity and duration of any harm?
- Effects upon the child's health/development?
- Immediate/longer term effects?
- Likelihood of recurrence?
- Child's reaction?
- Child's perception of the harm?
- Child's needs wishes and feelings?
- Parent's/carer's attitudes/response to concerns?
- How willing are they to co-operate?
- What does the child mean to the family?
- What role does the child play?
- Possible effects of intervention/
- Protective factors and strengths of/for child (i.e. resilience/vulnerability)
- Familial strengths and weaknesses/
- Possibilities?
- Probabilities?
- When and how is the child at risk?
- How imminent is any likely risk?
- How grave are the possible consequences/
- How safe is this child/
- What are the risk assessment options?
- What are the risk management options?
- What is the interim plan?

Appendix 3: About Possible Signs and Symptoms of Abuse (including Fabricated or Induced Illness Flowchart)

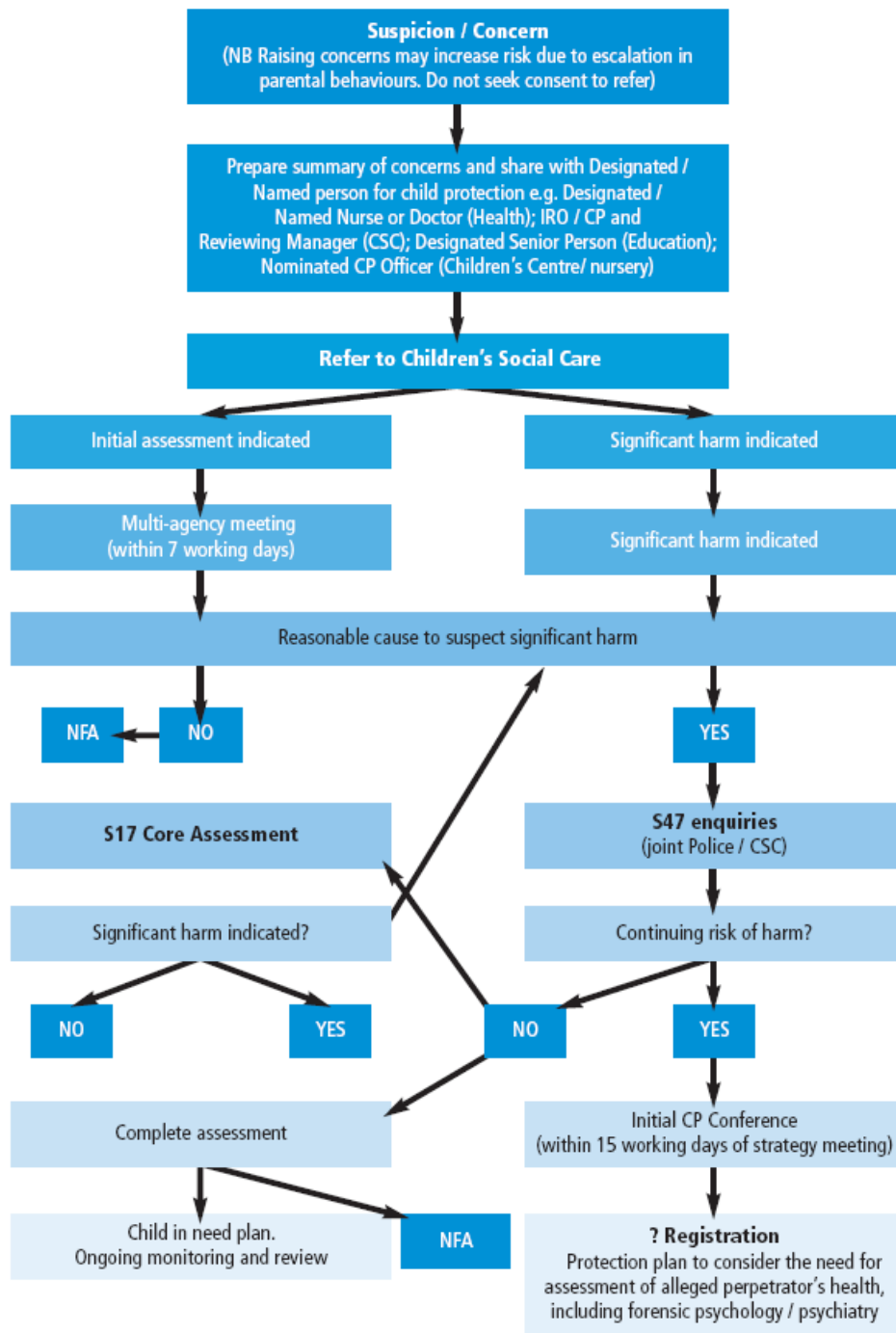
When making difficult judgments around possible sign and symptoms of abuse and neglect, it is crucial that we consider the available information and presenting injuries or behaviours **in context**. (We should also consider sources of other information which may be important but to which we do not have immediate access).

Lists of possible sign and symptoms of abuse must never be considered to be comprehensive or definitive, as children may behave strangely or appear unhappy or distressed for a variety of reasons as they move through different stages of development, and as their family circumstances and experiences change. Equally the presence of one or more of any of the commonly cited possible signs and symptoms 'prove' that a child has been, or is being abused. We need to be absolutely clear that our role is not to investigate or prove abuse but to gather and share information where we have concerns.

Professionals should also remember that all children regardless age, sex , ethnicity, disability race or culture, are entitled to the same level of protection and, as such, racial, cultural, religious or similar factors can never be used to 'explain 'or 'justify abuse or maltreatment.

Very detailed information about possible signs and symptoms of the 4 categories of abuse (i.e., Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect) is contained within the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Procedures.

FABRICATED OR INDUCED ILLNESS – FLOWCHART



Appendix 5: Talking and Listening to Children and Dealing with Disclosures

If a child wishes to confide in you, you ALWAYS

- Be accessible and receptive;
- Listen carefully and critically at the child's pace;
- Take what is said seriously ;
- Reassure children that they are right to tell;
- Tell the child that you must pass his information on;
- Make sure that the child is alright;
- Make a very careful record of what has been said (see recording)

You should NEVER

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse;
- Make promises about confidentiality or 'keeping secrets 'to children;
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc;
- Speculate or accuse anybody;
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information;
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved;
- Forget to record what you have been told;
- Fail to pass this on to the correct person;

Children with communication difficulties, or who use alternative /augmentive communication systems

- While extra care may be needed to ensure that the signs of abuse and neglect are interpreted correctly, any suspicions should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children;
- Opinion and interpretation will be crucial (be prepared to be asked about the basis for it and to possibly have its validity questioned if the matter goes to court).

Recordings should

- Be made as soon as possible after the disclosure;
- State who was present, time, date, and place;
- Be legible(if handwritten),written in ink and be signed by the recorder;
- Be passed to the appropriate person immediately (certainly within 24 hours);
- Use the child's words wherever possible;
- Be factual ,state exactly what was said;

- Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/ or allegation.

What information do you need to obtain?

- You have **no investigative** role in child protection (Police and children's Social Care will investigate possible abuse very thoroughly and in great detail, they will gather evidence and test hypotheses, leave this to them).
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record, and pass on;
- Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of **who, where, what and when;**
- The question you should be able to answer at the end of the listening process is 'might this be a child protection matter?'
- If the answer is 'yes' or if you are not sure, record and pass on immediately to your line manager.

If you do need to ask questions, what is and isn't ok?

- **Never** ask closed questions i.e. which children can answer yes or no to (e.g. did he touch you?)
- **Never** make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit, etc (e.g. top or bottom, front or back)
- If we must, use only **minimal prompts** such as 'tell me more' or 'tell me everything you can remember about that'
- Timescales are very important so it is relevant to ask 'when was the last time this happened?'

What else should we think about in relation to disclosure?

- We need to think carefully about our own body language, how we present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling us about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult and personal;
- Be prepared to answer 'what happens next' questions;
- Never make face value judgements or assumptions about individual children based on knowledge of, or previous contact with a particular child.
- Think about how you might react if a child did approach you. Be prepared to calmly offer reassurance, objectivity and protection.
- What support could you access for yourself in these circumstances?

Appendix 6 : Internal CP Recording Form Guidance Notes

This form is intended to be used as an internal record for children's centres/ nursery staff, it is a proforma that children's centres/ nurseries may or may not wish to use depending on the stage of development.

It is a way of informing managers (CP nominated officers) that it is the opinion of staff that a child is in need. The form enables the member of staff to be clear about their reason for highlighting their concerns, it requests a clear and concise account of concerns and directs staff to state times and dates of any incidents.

After initially speaking with the nominated child protection officer within 24hrs of concerns regarding a child (Appendix 1: Handling Concerns and Making Referrals) where a decision was made that the child was not in immediate danger, but there was cause for concern, the internal record could form a basis for following up these concerns with the parent whilst seeking their consent for further support, identified within the centre or from partner organisations.

It is good practice to discuss with parents concerns about a child, this, although difficult for staff can often begin the process for supporting the family to address any issue.

It is good practice for parents to sign the form to ensure they are clear about any suggestions that have been made and agree with the record of the conversation.

The form once complete should be kept in a confidential family file (if used) and any record of a referral to another organisation, or referral within the children's centre/ nursery can be recorded.

Appendix 7: Useful Links

Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board
www.lancashire.gov.uk/safeguardingchildrenboard/

Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare Service
<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/childcare>

OFSTED-
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>

Link to Early Years Effective Practice/ keeping safe
http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/eyfs/resources/downloads/1_3_ep.pdf

Every Child Matters
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Children Act 2004
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/20040031.htm>

'What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused'
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00182/>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Following the publication of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006), Lancashire's Multi Agency Policy, Guidance and Procedures, in respect of children in need of protection have been updated and are now superseded by the 'Lancashire Safeguarding Children Procedures' (2006)

The executive summary highlights the key changes introduced, but where there are concern about the welfare of a child, reference should be made to the procedures themselves. They have been made available electronically to promote wider access and to facilitate updates when required. Wherever possible in the electronic document, links have been made to nay additional guidance referred to.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 outlines the principles underpinning work with children and families. It also includes key definitions and concepts used (see also Appendix A). There is an emphasis on the wider responsibilities of agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, which if effective should reduce the need for action to protect children from harm. Effective measures to safeguard children should not be seen in isolation from the wider range of support and services which may be required to meet the needs of children and families.

The definitions of emotional abuse and neglect have been extended. Emotional abuse now includes 'seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another'. This recognises the long term damage to children as a result of witnessing domestic violence. The definition of neglect is widened to include ' neglect during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance use'

Chapter 2: Roles and Responsibilities of Agencies

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a shared responsibility which requires effective joint working and partnerships between all agencies, professionals, children and young people, parents and carers and the wider community. Chapter 2 sets out the requirements for all organisations who provide services for, or who work with children in meeting their safeguarding responsibilities. The roles, responsibilities and duties of specific agencies are briefly outlined. (For more detailed descriptions, reference should be made to 'Working Together to Safeguard Children ')

Chapter 3: Local Safeguarding Children Board

Chapter 3 explains the role, function, governance and operation of the Lancashire safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) which replaced the

Lancashire Area Child Protection Committee in April 2006. Significant changes include:

- The Children Act 2004 places the LSCB on statutory footing.
- The board will hold agencies to account in fulfilling their statutory obligations in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This will be achieved by a peer review process based on self evaluation, performance indicators and joint audit.
- The membership of the LSCB has been increased to reflect its wider safeguarding responsibilities.
- The LSCB will be assisted in achieving its objectives by 5 Locality safeguarding Children Groups.
- A Child Death Overview Panel will be established by 2008 to review all child deaths.

Chapter 4: Procedures for the Management of Individual Cases

Chapter 4 provides guidance on what should happen if anyone has concerns about the welfare of a child, and in particular, concerns that a child may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering, significant harm. Whilst the process and timescales for action remain the same the following should be noted;

- The four key processes that underpin all work with children and families (assessment, planning, intervention and review as set out in the Integrated Children's System) apply equally to work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. A series of flowcharts at the end of Chapter 4 provide an easy to follow guide of the processes (and timescales) for action from the point of referral to the child protection conference and review.
- When making a referral to Children's Social Care, if the referrer has not received an acknowledgment within three **working days**, they should contact the Directorate again.
- The guidance relating to information sharing remains unchanged, although a link to the DfES guidance is available 'Information Sharing: Practitioners Guide'.
- Where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of significant harm, the overriding objective must be to safeguard the interest of the child.
- Whenever Children's Social Care has a case referred to them which constitutes or may constitute a criminal offence against a child, they should always discuss the case with the police at the earliest opportunity. Similarly, when other agencies, or the Local Authority in its other roles, believe this to be the case, they must always consider sharing the information with Children's Social Care or the police in order to protect the child or other children from risk of significant harm. If a decision is taken not to share information, the reasons must be clearly recorded.
- Where there are child protection concerns, the social worker should always record this as an expression of concern on ISSIS (the child's

case record. If **two** expressions of concern are logged within **12 month period**, the Children's Social Care Team Leader should undertake an initial assessment to determine if the child is a child in need.

- Where a strategy discussion is held(either by telephone or a meeting),the information shared ,all decisions reached and the basis for those decisions should be clearly recorded and circulated by the chairperson **within one working day** to all parties to the discussion ,using the ICS Record Of Strategy Discussion.
- Parents and Children of sufficient age and understanding (together with professionals and agencies significantly involved) should receive a copy of the S47 Enquiries record, in particular, in advance of any initial child protection conference that is convened.
- Any decision not to proceed to a child protection conference where it is known that a child has suffered significant harm must be taken in consultation with all the agencies involved. The Children's Social Care Team Leader must discuss the outcome with the Independent Reviewing Officer before taking and recording a decision not to proceed to a child protection conference. Where there are differences of opinion, the final decision rests with Children's Social Care Area Manager
- Those professionals most involved with the child and family and those who have taken part in enquiries have the right to request that Children's Social Care convene a child protection conference if they have serious concerns that a child may not otherwise be adequately safeguarded. Any such request that is supported by a senior manager or named/designated professional will normally be agreed.
- If consideration is being given to the initiation of care proceedings, a child protection conference must be held even if the child has been removed from the situation where the harm was incurred.
- The social worker and the line manager will ensure that all significant events that are potentially life-threatening are immediately notified, via the full line management route, to the Head of Children's Social Care. This should be done verbally in the first instance and followed up in writing as soon as possible. Examples of occurrences that constitute a significant event are detailed at the end of chapter 4.

Chapter 5: the child Protection Conference, Child Protection Plan and the Child Protection Register.

Chapter 5 outlines the circumstances for holding a child protection conference. The conference must consider all the children in the household; even if concerns are only being expressed about one child.

The following key points should be noted:

- Participation of children, parents, and carers should be encouraged. The child's voice should always be heard at the conference. This can be achieved in a variety of ways, and detailed guidance is given.

- It is important that children and parents/carers (where appropriate) have been given the opportunity to read the Social Worker's Report in advance of the conference to allow them to digest the information and comment on the content. The report should therefore be completed at least 24 hours before the initial conference or 48 hours before the review conference.
- Other professionals should also provide reports in advance that should be consistent with the domains and dimensions of the Assessment Framework.
- A copy of the Conference Decision Record detailing the decision of the conference, recommendations, Outline Child Protection Plan and core group membership, will be sent to all attendees and core group members **within one working day** of the conference.
- The minutes should be sent to all those professionals who attended the conference, core group members and the medical consultant in charge of the case **within ten working days**.
- The role of the key worker is outlined, which includes seeing the child **at least every four weeks** to ascertain their wishes and feelings, and to ensure they are up to date with the child protection plan.
- Emphasis is placed on the child protection plan (as opposed to the act of registration) as the means to ensure the child is safe and protected from further suffering or harm. Note that the DfES propose to phase out the child protection register by 1st April 2008 (*CHECK*). It will be replaced by a register of children who are subject to a child protection plan.
- Enquiries to the child protection register can be made by authorised representatives of agencies (listed in appendix W) who have concerns about the welfare of a child. The process and circumstances under which enquiries can be made are outlined. If two enquiries are made to the register within a 12-month period, the responsible team leader will undertake initial assessment to determine if a child is in need.
- When a child on the register moves or goes missing, the key worker should inform the Register Administer, Team Leader and other professionals.
- As part of the independent reviewing officer's quality assurance role, a quality assurance checklist will be completed after every child protection conference.

Chapter 6: Protecting children in Specific Circumstances.

Chapter 6 outlines the circumstances of children who may be particularly vulnerable. The purpose is to help inform the procedures for the Management of Individual Cases (chapter 4). The chapter is considerably more detailed than previously and includes reference to the following:

- Children being sexually exploited;
- Child abuse and information technology;
- Child victims of trafficking;

- Sexually active children and young people (incorporates the LSCB protocol for working with sexually active young people under the age of 18);
- Fabricated or induced illness (detailed new guidance outlines the process from point of referral to the child protection conference);
- Investigating complex (organised or multiple) abuse;
- Historical abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage (includes new flowchart) (*CHECK WHERE IT IS*);
- Allegations of abuse made against a person who works with children (this is supplemented by appendix R which provides new guidance on the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer);
- Essential safeguards where children are living away from home;
- A private fostering arrangement (a link is available too the new Private Fostering Procedures);
- Children in custody;
- Children in hospital;
- Children cared for by day;
- Abuse of children with disabilities;
- Children and young people who abuse others (this section has been updated and should be read in conjunction with Chapter7:Managing Individuals Who Pose a Risk Of Harm to Children);
- Bullying
- Children whose behaviour indicates a lack of parental control;
- Children who self harm; Future risk of harm to an unborn child;
- Sudden unexplained child deaths (more detailed guidance to follow);
- Race and Racism;
- Domestic violence;
- Parental mental ill health (this section contains more detailed guidance in respect of multi agency work and agency responsibilities consistent with 'Working Together'. Reference should also be made to Appendix T, the Multi Agency Adult Mental Health and Child Protection Guidance and Protocol ');
- Parental substance misuse;
- Child abuse linked to spiritual and religious belief;' possession ' or 'witchcraft'
- Missing children and families (reference should also be made to Appendix U, the Joint Protocol,' Young People Missing From Care');
- Children and families living in temporary accommodation;
- Children from abroad;
- Children whose parents are in the armed services.

Chapter 7: Managing Individuals who pose a Risk of Harm to Children

The chapter provides practice guidance and information about a range of mechanisms that are available when managing people who have been identified as presenting risk or potential risk of harm to children.

The sexual Offences Act 2003 introduced a number of new offences to deal with those who abuse and exploit children in this way (listed within the chapter. The term 'Schedule One offender should no longer be used for anyone convicted of a crime against a child. The focus should be on whether the individual poses a 'risk of harm to children'.

The Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) provide a national framework for the assessment and management of risks posed by serious and violent offenders. The criteria and processes for managing risk are detailed in this chapter.

Other mechanisms for working with and monitoring people who may present a risk to children are also documented. For example, Offending Behaviour Programmes, Disqualification Orders, the Protection of Children Act, Dfes List 99, the Sex Offender Register, Notification Orders, Sexual Offences Prevention Orders and Risk of Sexual Harm Orders.

Chapter 8: Local Agency Procedures

This chapter should include links to the internal procedures of LSCB partner agencies, outlining the specific procedural requirement of each agency in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Appendices

There are 23 appendices to the procedures which include a range of materials to support practice, from a glossary of terms, to multi agency protocols which have been endorsed by the Lancashire Safeguarding Board (or its predecessor, the Lancashire area Child protection Committee). The purpose is to pull together any additional guidance in relation to safeguarding so that it is accessible in one document. Electronic links to the appendices enable quick and easy reference to the materials.