



QUEEN VICTORIA SCHOOL DUNBLANE

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

CONTENTS

Section

1. INTRODUCTION
2. RATIONALE
3. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO PROTECTION AND CARE
4. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE
5. CONFIDENTIALITY and CONSENT
6. ACTION IN SPECIFIC CASES OF CONCERN
7. RESPONDING WHEN CHILDREN TELL US OF ABUSE AND FLOW CHART
8. ROLE OF SCHOOL IN PROTECTING CHILDREN
9. GUIDANCE FOR STAFF ON INTERACTION WITH PUPILS
10. INDICATORS OF ABUSE
11. ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR
12. APPENDIX

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

1. INTRODUCTION

With the passing of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 has come research by members of a variety of professions into the area of child abuse. Their work has been expressed in a number of books, articles, papers and the reports of inquiries. Out of it has come a significantly greater awareness not only of the existence but also of the prevalence and consequences of child abuse. There has also been developed a realisation of the many forms which abuse may take, not all necessarily open to neat classification. Along with this has come something of an understanding of the difficulty and delicacy in the handling of allegations or suspicions of abuse. The methods of, and the motives for, concealment are reasonably clear. The ascertainment of the truth remains, and will always remain, a task requiring considerable patience, skill and sensibility. There are hazards to be faced both in the damage which can be done by unjust allegations and the harm redoubled by truth ignored.

The staff of a school have an important part to play in the sensitive and delicate work of dealing with known or suspected cases of abuse. But in addition to that they have a role of very particular importance in the identification of the signs of abuse. There are opportunities within the context of school life for observing symptoms which could otherwise well pass unnoticed. But for advantage to be taken of these opportunities there is a need for some knowledge of those symptoms and an awareness of the action which requires to be taken when they are identified.

Furthermore, with the introduction of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, National Care Standards require quality assurance of child protection procedures in boarding schools. The Children's Charter (2005) forms an integral part of this process.

These guidelines are designed to inform and support staff who have an important part to play in Child Protection. However, as well as the aim of identification and response and taking appropriate action to ensure the safety of the children involved, there are two other main aims associated with protecting children in schools. They are:

- Helping young people to develop skills, values and knowledge which will assist them to assert their rights, accept their responsibilities, build better relationships and thus be better placed to deal with potential hazards such as abuse or harassment, and to report them.
- Creating an ethos in schools which promotes values such as self-esteem, openness, tolerance and caring, so that children are less likely to become adults who misuse their power,

Section 7 refers directly to the above aims. Education for Personal Safety is dealt with in a focused way during PSE periods from P7 - S5/6 returning to sensitive topics as the pupils mature and develop.

- The Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) for Queen Victoria School is

DHT (P&G) Steven Adams

- The Deputy CPC for Queen Victoria School is

DHT(PS) Carole Phipps

2. RATIONALE

All children have the right to be protected. Child abuse is no respecter of class or wealth. People who abuse children do not necessarily look like “abusers”. They may be otherwise quite ordinary and respectable; a fact that makes it very difficult for the children they abuse to be believed or to get help.

These are unpalatable facts. There is an instinctive desire to dismiss them out of hand. Those who have dedicated their lives to caring for and educating children may find it extremely difficult to appreciate that some people neglect or seek to harm children, even their own children, or to use them for their own sexual gratification. There is a temptation to deny that child abuse exists. It may be even more difficult for them to appreciate that some individuals are drawn to professions such as teaching and other child related employment precisely because it affords opportunities for pursuing their own gratification through access to children.

Where a caring adult is faced with concerns about a particular child, fear as well as denial may come into play. What can or should that adult do to find out whether the suspicions are justified? If he or she makes a report to the Family Unit (FU), and the suspicions turn out to be unfounded, what would the implications be for the child, the family, the school and the adult who made the report? If the adult does nothing, he or she may on the other hand be left with fears of having let the child down, and the child may continue to suffer in silence.

Where a work colleague is suspected, loyalty to that person may make raising the issue especially difficult.

All adults who have the charge or care of children have a responsibility to ensure that the children in their care are not harmed. This applies to teachers generally, but with added force to schools with a boarding facility. The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 gives a statutory focus to that responsibility by placing upon the managers of independent boarding schools a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children resident there. The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS) and HM Inspectorate will undertake a programme of inspections to determine whether the children’s welfare is adequately safeguarded within schools.

In order to fulfil part of their responsibility, it is strongly advised that every independent school sets in place child protection procedures:

- that a designated senior member of staff be responsible for co-ordinating the procedures
- that every member of staff has a personal copy of the written procedures
- that every member of staff has a personal copy of the written procedures and training in their application
- that parents and pupils alike are made aware of such procedures
- that pupils be advised it is legitimate for them to raise with staff concerns about their own safety
- that parents be advised it is legitimate for them to express concerns to the Child Protection Co-ordinator, the Head or the Board of Commissioners if they feel that a child may be being abused.

3. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO PROTECTION AND CARE

- Every child should be treated as an individual.
- Children have the right to express their views about any issues or decisions affecting or worrying them.
- Every effort should be made to preserve the child's family home and contacts.
- Parents should normally be responsible for the upbringing and care of their children.
- Children, whoever they are and wherever they live, have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Every child has the right to a positive sense of identity.
- Any intervention in the life of a child or family should be on formally stated grounds, properly justified, in close consultation with all the relevant parties.
- Any intervention in the life of a child, including the provision of supportive services, should be based on collaboration between all the relevant agencies.

CHILDREN LIVING AWAY FROM HOME IN RESIDENTIAL CARE

Rights and Responsibilities: young people, children and their parents should be given a clear statement of their rights and responsibilities. They should have a confidential means of making complaints. They should be involved in decisions affecting them and in the provision for their care. Their rights should be consistently respected.

A Feeling of Safety: young people and children should feel safe and secure in any care setting.

The above list is based on the principles drawn from the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as the recommendations of a number of Government bodies and inquiries including Lord Clyde's Inquiry into the Removal of Children from Orkney.

4. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

The term child abuse was first used in Britain in 1980 - DSS Circular. The process of definition has been refined through experience and by 1988 there were five official categories of abuse.

- i. Physical abuse
- ii. Neglect
- iii. Emotional abuse
- iv. Sexual abuse
- v. Non-organic failure to thrive

i. **PHYSICAL ABUSE** is defined as:

Actual or attempted physical injury to a child, including the administration of toxic substances, where there is knowledge, or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Included along with serious incidents and series of minor incidents are deliberate poisoning or injury* or other harm resulting from parental action prior to birth such as drug misuse or domestic violence.

ii. **PHYSICAL NEGLECT** is defined as:

This occurs when a child's essential needs are not met and this is likely to cause impairment to physical health and development. Such needs include food, clothing, cleanliness, shelter and warmth. A lack of appropriate care, including access to health care, may result in persistent or severe exposure, through negligence, to circumstances which endanger the child.

Physical neglect may also include a failure to secure appropriate medical treatment or failure to ensure that a child follows a course of medical treatment.

iii. **EMOTIONAL ABUSE** is defined as:

Failure to provide for the child's basic emotional needs such as to have a severe effect on the behaviour and development of the child.

In general terms, a child may be thought to be emotionally abused when his or her emotional development is impaired by a lack of affection and loving care. More specifically, the child may be consistently ridiculed and found to be wrong, with his or her confidence undermined in daily routine activities within the home. The child may be the subject of verbal aggression, regardless of behaviour, and may become the family scapegoat, the focus of all things negative within the home. Isolation from normal social experiences may be the norm as may anxiety states prompted by intimidation.

* Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy

iv. **SEXUAL ABUSE** is defined as:

Any child below the age of 16 may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person(s), by design or neglect, exploits the child, directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or any other person(s), including organised networks. This definition holds whether or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated or consented to the behaviour.

Sexual abuse includes incest, rape, indecent assault and indecent photographing of children. It also includes encouraging children into prostitution or to witness intercourse or pornographic materials. The exploitative element can be difficult to define, particularly when sexual activity takes place between children and young people. Relevant issues include:

- descriptions of the range of sexual activity
- levels of consent
- inequalities in age, gender, developmental stage, physical strength or size
- the betrayal of trust and responsibility
- power relationships, including gender
- actual or threatened coercion
- the child's perception of threat

This definition includes children and young people who sexually abuse other children and young people.

v. **NON-ORGANIC FAILURE TO THRIVE** relates to:

Children who significantly fail to reach normal growth and developmental milestones (ie physical growth, weight, motor, social and intellectual development) where physical and genetic reasons for the failure have been medically eliminated and a diagnosis of non-organic failure to thrive has been established.

Non-organic failure to thrive may be a consequence of a complex interplay of physical and emotional deprivation. Criteria which apply before registration is made under this category are:-

- there should be a medical diagnosis of failure to thrive which explains that the diagnosis is non-organic in origin
- there should be a complementary family/social assessment which identifies elements of physical and/or emotional deprivation.

The above criteria may be more easily applied in respect of babies and infants. For older children psychological assessment may usefully complement medical and social work assessments.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY and CONSENT

Privacy and confidentiality is governed by legal provisions that aim to safeguard personal information.

A member of staff may be approached by a pupil being abused or by a third party. Such information may be offered in confidence but it would be entirely wrong for the recipient of such information to keep it to himself or herself.

If a child or young person is considered to be at risk of harm to themselves or others, then relevant information must always be shared with the appropriate designated staff. It is important to understand the clear distinction between making the child/young person aware that information will/may be shared and seeking their consent for that sharing.

No absolute guarantee of confidentiality should be given.

Staff must be aware that discussion about confidential matters must be conducted in an environment where that confidentiality will be maintained, eg corridors and the dining room would be deemed inappropriate.

The aim of the School is always to act in the best interests of the child.

6. ACTION IN SPECIFIC CASES OF CONCERN

6.1 HOW CONCERNS MAY ARISE

Concerns about child abuse may arise in the following circumstances:

- A member of staff has suspicions arising from observations of the child's behaviour or appearance, or things the child has said.
- A child tells a member of staff that abuse has taken place or that the child feels unsafe.
- A third party expresses concerns to a member of staff; this could be another pupil, a parent or guardian.
- An anonymous allegation is received.

6.2 A MEMBER OF STAFF SUSPECTS ABUSE OR A CHILD TELLS OF ABUSE

The suspicions of a staff member may be aroused by the presence of indicators of abuse, or by a feeling, based on knowledge of the child, that all is not well, or by a mixture of factors.

It is appropriate and correct for a member of staff to make a casual enquiry to a child about how an obvious injury was sustained, or why the child appears upset. There is a particular obligation on all staff to enquire into such matters in a boarding school.

Where there is any suspicion of abuse, staff should not enter into detailed investigation of the symptoms or causes of the child's distress or injury. Such an approach could prejudice later formal investigations. The role of school staff is to

- a) **OBSERVE**
- b) **R E C O R D**
- c) **REPORT**

Staff should:

- a) **Observe** carefully the child's behaviour and demeanour

- b) **Record**

Respond without showing signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock.

Enquire casually about how an injury was sustained or why a child appears upset.

Confidentiality should not be promised to children or adults.

Observe carefully the behaviour or demeanour of the child/person expressing concern.

Record in detail what you have seen or heard.

Do NOT interrogate or enter into detailed investigations; rather encourage the child/person to say what he or she wants to establish the basic facts.

And then

- c) **Report** to the Child Protection Co-ordinator as quickly as possible by completing a Child Protection Cause for Concern form and handing it to the DHT (P&G) in person, or the DHT (PS) if DHT (P&G) is not available.

It may be that a child seeks a promise of confidentiality either before or after telling of abuse. No absolute guarantee of confidentiality can be given. It should be explained to the child that, whilst the staff member understands his/her concerns and will do what is possible to respect the child's wishes, he or she will have to pass on information if they think it is necessary to protect the child.

If the child then draws back from speaking to the staff member, that person should ask whether there is another adult in the school to whom the child would be prepared to talk. Failing that, the child should be informed of the possibility of making a private and confidential telephone call to ChildLine on 08001111. ChildLine's approach is to listen to the child, discuss options and encourage the child to seek help from a trusted adult. **A member of staff who is concerned about a child in these circumstances should inform a) the Housemaster/Housemistress then b) the Child Protection Co-ordinator that the child appears to have concerns.**

6.3 A THIRD PARTY EXPRESSES CONCERN

A member of staff to whom a third party expresses concern should:

- a) **Observe** the behaviour or demeanour of the person expressing the concerns, where this is done in person.
- b) **Record** in detail what they have seen and heard and when they did so. Actual words used should be quoted where possible.
- c) **Report** the matter to the Housemaster/Housemistress and/or Child Protection Co-ordinator.

Those expressing the concerns may seek from the staff member a guarantee of confidentiality. No absolute guarantee of confidentiality can be given. The information disclosed may be of such a nature that the staff member must pass it on in order to protect a child. Whilst it may be possible to a certain extent to protect the identity of the person expressing concerns, it will be easier to take action to protect the child if that person is willing to be identified. If legal proceedings follow it will, in all likelihood, be necessary to disclose the identity of that person.

Where the concerns are expressed by another pupil, it should be remembered that reporting suspicions of abuse may be traumatic for a child, and some support may be advisable.

6.4 AN ANONYMOUS ALLEGATION IS RECEIVED

Staff in receipt of anonymous allegations about child abuse should:

- a) **Record** in writing the words used, so far as possible, where the allegation is by telephone, or retain the paper, where it is in writing.
- b) **Report** the matter to the Housemaster/Housemistress and/or Child Protection Co-ordinator.

6.5 REPORTING TO THE CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR

The report to the Child Protection Co-ordinator should, where possible, be made on the same day that the concerns arise.

The member of staff making the report should keep a signed and dated record of when the allegations were reported to the Child Protection Co-ordinator.

Information about the allegation must not be shared with any person other than the Child Protection Co-ordinator or the Head.

If either the Head or the Child Protection Co-ordinator is suspected of involvement in the alleged abuse, the procedure is as follows:

A report should be made to the Chairman of the Commissioners. It will be the responsibility of the Commissioners to consider and decide upon the matters referred to above. Commissioners are advised to take independent advice on the matter to avoid any suspicions of a “cover-up”.

6.6 ACTION BY STAFF IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES

By law, any person with concerns about a child has a right to make a report direct to the CPU and/or the Reporter to the Children’s Panel. In exceptional cases, where a member of staff feels that concerns about a child are not being taken seriously, or followed through appropriately or with sufficient speed, it is perfectly legitimate for that member of staff to refer the matter direct to the Reporter.

6.7 ACTION BY CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR

The Child Protection Co-ordinator will collate all relevant information held by the school on the child. As an aid to this, a co-ordination meeting will be held, involving relevant members of staff and the Head. It should be made clear to all, that matters disclosed must be treated in the strictest confidence. Support will be available for the child and the member of staff making the report.

The Co-ordination meeting will consider the following:-

- whether medical treatment or assessment is indicated
- what is known about the child’s family situation
- are there implications for siblings
- are there implications for other pupils
- are the parents aware of the allegations and what is their likely attitude
- who supports the child who reported the allegation on behalf of the alleged abused pupil

At the conclusion of the co-ordinating meeting, a decision should be made about whether there are concerns which require a referral to the social work department. Referrals should be made in every case where there is any substantial suspicion. **Proof is not required at this stage.** If there is doubt about whether to refer, the FU should be advised anyway of the circumstances of the allegation and the school’s doubts about it.

Minutes should be kept of the co-ordination meeting together with a record of the reasons for the decision to refer or not to refer. These should be sited confidentially within the school.

Where the conclusion is that there may be grounds for suspicion that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, the Child Protection Co-ordinator should immediately inform the school’s local contact in the FU.

In such cases, the CPC should notify SCSWIS by the appropriate channel.

The Head should send a brief report of the incident in confidence to the Chairman of Commissioners or his deputy. The names of the people involved should not be disclosed in this report unless there are exceptional reasons for doing so. In the case of an allegation against a member of staff it may

be appropriate to name the member of staff as the Commissioners are responsible for his/her employment.

6.8 CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

In General

Any allegation against a member of staff must be taken seriously, and there must be at least a preliminary consideration of it by the school. If the conclusion after such consideration is that the allegation is completely unfounded, the decision to take the matter no further should be recorded, together with the reasons for it, and the information placed in a confidential file.

Members of staff will wish to seek advice and support from their professional associations in these circumstances.

Allegations against members of staff should be intimated as soon as possible to the parents or guardians of the child concerned, even if they are felt to be unfounded. The initial communication with parents should be to the effect only that an allegation has been made. Further details, identifying the member of staff concerned, should not be given until specific legal advice has been obtained.

In general, the same procedures should be followed as for other allegations or suspicions of abuse. There is an added dimension in that the school will have to consider the need to ensure that children are protected while the allegation is under investigation.

The Head should consider whether there is a need:

- to remove the member of staff from access to children;
- to suspend the member of staff.

6.9 SPECIFIC ALLEGATIONS

Where the allegation concerns minor incidents of physical abuse, it may be appropriate to deal with it in terms of the school's staff disciplinary procedures, after consultation with the child concerned and the parents. This might be appropriate where there are no ongoing child protection concerns.

When staff disciplinary procedures are being formulated or reviewed, it is important that linkages are made between the disciplinary procedures and the child protection procedures, so that there is clarity about the purpose and justification of any particular action by the school management.

Where the allegations are more serious, or relate to sexual impropriety, it should not be appropriate to deal with them solely within the school. A conclusion by the co-ordination meeting/discussion referred to above that there was any basis for concern should result in a referral to outside agencies, principally the FU and the police, if appropriate.

6.10 ABUSE BY OTHER PUPILS

This may involve:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse, eg bullying, racial harassment, cyber bullying
- sexual abuse

In the case of minor incidents of physical and emotional abuse, the school's normal disciplinary procedures will apply. In more serious cases, the Head will have to involve the parents of the victim and the alleged perpetrator. The Head may wish to discuss with the victim and his or her parents whether there should be police involvement.

Sexual incidents require a variety of responses: did the incident amount to rape or indecent assault, willing participation in under-age sex in a non-exploitative relationship, or exploratory childish activity? The key concepts are age difference, informed and unforced consent and relative power.

Abusive peer activities, eg initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying **MUST NEVER** be tolerated. The school takes a clear and open anti-bullying stance which is well understood by all staff and pupils.

6.11 CHILD ABUSE WITHIN THE FAMILY

In cases where it is suspected that child abuse may be occurring within the family, initial contact with parents will not be made by the School but by the FU, the social work department or the police. The school must be especially sensitive to the fears of children in these situations. If a child is afraid to go home, staff should talk to the child about why he or she is afraid.

7. RESPONDING WHEN CHILDREN TELL ABOUT ABUSE

Staff should:

- **Listen** with care.
- **Reassure** the child that he/she is not to blame.
- Not show **disbelief**.
- Not give a guarantee of **confidentiality**.
- Take the allegation **seriously**.
- Affirm the child's **feelings** as expressed (don't tell the child how he/she should feel).
- Avoid being **judgmental** about the information given by the child.
- Avoid a "**whodunit**" approach (a casual enquiry about who did it is all right, but do not pursue the matter; remember, it can be distressing for children to be faced with persistent questioning).
- **Refer** to the Child Protection Co-ordinator in accordance with school guidelines.

Whilst the primary function of school staff is to listen and record, some casual questioning may be appropriate. The child should not be interrogated. Any questions should aim to obtain basic information. If the child does not respond, the matter should not be pursued further. The pursuit and recovery of evidence is a matter for the police, if necessary. Where questions are asked, "open-ended" questions should be used rather than "leading" questions which suggest possible answers. Avoid questions beginning with 'how' or 'why'.

Some examples of:

Open ended Questions / Leading Questions:

Open:

WHEN

When did it happen?

WHERE

Where did it happen?

WHO

Who did it?

WHAT

What happened?

Leading:

Did it happen last night?

Did he/she come into your bedroom?

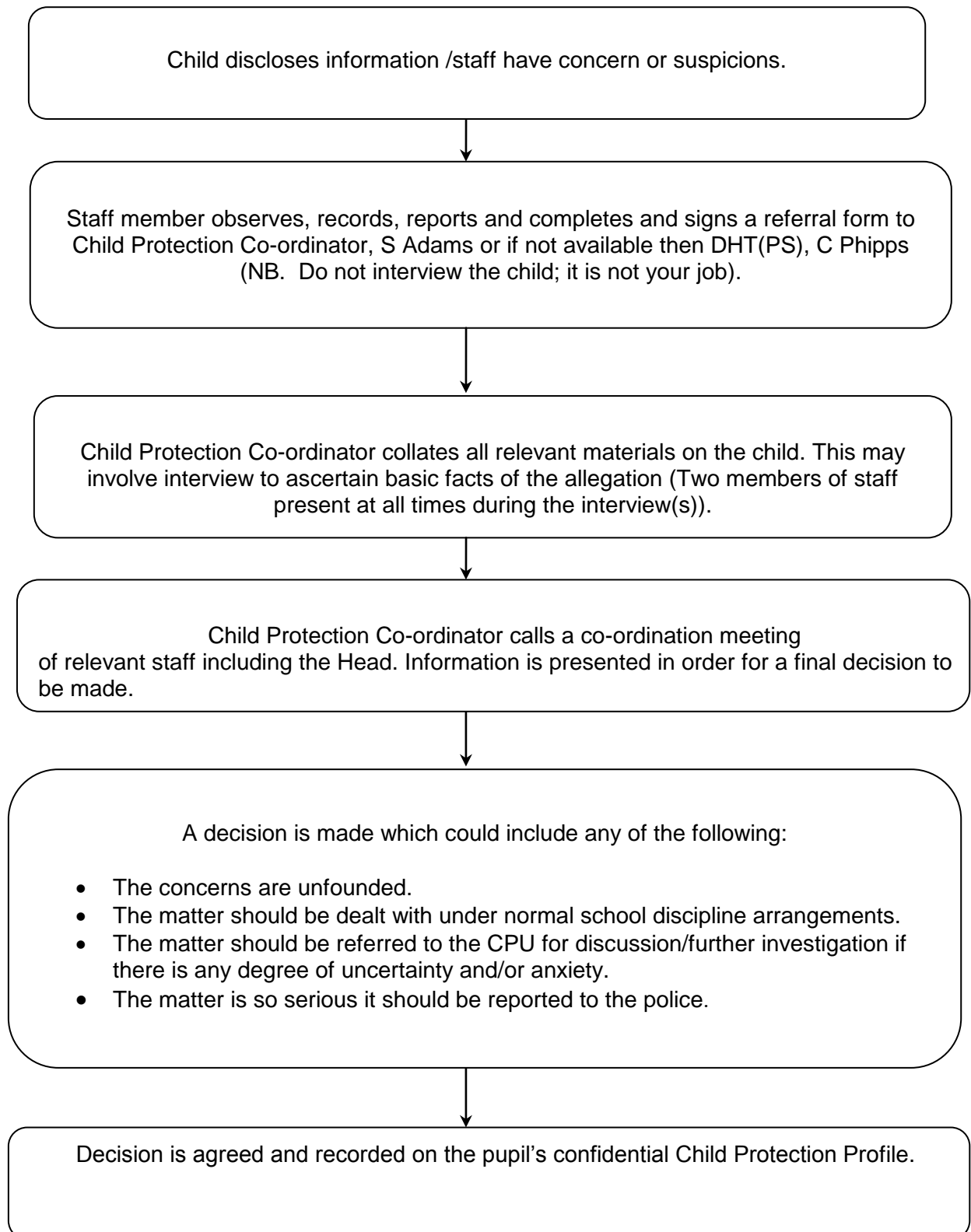
Was it daddy//baby-sitter/John?

Did such and such happen?

REMEMBER:

- a. Keep questions open ended.
- b. Do not prompt or suggest to obtain the answer you think you want to hear.
- c. Record notes of initial disclosure on the same working day and report to Child Protection Co-ordinator.

7.1 FLOW CHART FOR SCHOOL PROCEDURES



- **Child Protection Co-ordinator - Steven Adams 0131 310 2973 or 07920 782 432**
- **Deputy Child Protection Co-ordinator Carole Phipps 0131 310 2961 or 07920 782 481**

8. THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL IN PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM ABUSE

We have a clearly set out Pastoral Policy which proclaims the ethos we constantly are seeking to achieve. The following is a re-statement of it for the purposes of Child Protection.

If children are encouraged to understand their rights and to be appropriately assertive, then they will feel more confident in their relationships with adults.

If children know they will be listened to, they are more likely to communicate openly with adults in the school.

If they are respected then they will develop self-esteem.

These things will happen in a supportive and caring environment.

The school should be a place where children are aware that adults show respect for each other and for children and where people are tolerant of different backgrounds, customs and beliefs.

Children need suitable role models. If our school can be a place:

- where there is tolerance and respect;
- where children are encouraged to be appropriately assertive and feel good about themselves, then we will be beginning to help them to protect themselves from abuse.

The school can ensure:

- that children have opportunities to develop self-esteem and awareness of themselves as persons;
- that children are helped to protect themselves from abuse by becoming more assertive;
- that children are presented with situations where they can learn to make decisions and choices.

Children should be given the opportunities to:

- make judgements about people;
- learn how to deal with dangerous or threatening situations involving adults.

They will need experience in showing and expressing feelings themselves and in recognising feelings expressed by others.

There are many opportunities which arise in schools that allow children

- to express themselves;
- to co-operate with others;
- to respect the views of others;
- to evaluate their own work and the work of others.

All these activities provide contexts where pupils will feel that their opinions are valuable and contribute to an enhanced self-esteem.

9. GUIDANCE FOR STAFF ON INTERACTION WITH PUPILS

9.1 PROTECTING OURSELVES

The current climate of suspicion with regard to child abuse poses a real dilemma for caring adults. This is true in all schools but especially so in boarding situations where schools take a pride in fostering a family atmosphere. In order to protect children from abuse, and staff from suspicions of abuse, the natural inclination to comfort and reassure children through physical contact has to be curbed, and impulse restrained, by a considered assessment of the situation.

This does not mean that physical contact is never permissible. It does mean that adults touching children must operate within understood limits, and that contact outwith those limits must be a considered response which can be justified if necessary.

Where those limits lie will vary according to the age of the child and the role of the member of staff. A young child in a boarding situation may well require to be comforted and reassured. Prohibition of any physical contact would clearly not be to the benefit of the child.

One would expect the need and desirability of such contact with older pupils, to be considerably less, although even in these circumstances situations could arise in which it would be a natural and human occurrence. The death of a pupil, for example, might make it natural for pupils and teachers to grieve together and touching would be neither unusual nor undesirable, so long as it was agreeable to both parties and limited.

Common-sense is a good guide, but it must be informed common sense. Child abusers often seek to gain the trust and confidence of children by seeming to care and then exploiting that trust. It is important for caring adults to understand that too-generous limits which can be operated satisfactorily by some, can be exploited by others with less worthy motives.

The following guidance is offered as a starting point for further development through training.

9.2 OPPORTUNITY

Opportunities for abuse exist in all schools, especially boarding schools, and in one-to-one situations eg tutorials, music lessons, guidance interviews, sick room.

The simplest advice would be to try, so far as possible to avoid being alone with a child or young person. This may prove difficult, or even impossible at times, especially in a boarding situation where it might be seen as beneficial for a child to have some opportunity for one-to-one contact with an adult. Where one-to-one contact does happen, it should be arranged sensibly, with others, where possible, within earshot or vision.

Excursions out of the school, especially residential excursions, can provide opportunities for abuse. Care should be taken to ensure that there are sufficient adults to provide proper supervision.

9.3 PHYSICAL CONTACT

For example, this may be for the purpose of care, instruction, restraint, etc. Staff should always be able to justify resorting to physical contact in any situation. The nature of the contact should be limited to what is appropriate. Restraint should involve only the minimum force necessary to protect children at imminent risk of harming themselves or others, or inflicting damage to property. Colleagues should, where possible, be summoned to witness and assist if necessary.

9.4 INAPPROPRIATE REMARKS

Salacious or demeaning remarks should never be made to or in the presence of children and young people. Remarks about a child's physical characteristics or development, or suggestive or derogatory comments could fall into this category.

9.5 ATTACHMENTS

You are strongly advised to share your concerns with a senior colleague if:

- You suspect that a child or young person is becoming inappropriately attached to you or to another member of staff.
- Your relationship with or feelings towards a child or young person are placing you at risk of unprofessional behaviour.
- You must never exchange personal telephone numbers or any other forms of electronic communication with pupils.

Avoid any physical horseplay which a pupil or, indeed, another adult might misinterpret, no matter how innocent or how well intentioned your actions might be.

Therefore, to avoid any misinterpretation, always respect a pupil's right to personal privacy by knocking on doors before entering; shout ahead when entering showers and/or changing rooms.

10. INDICATORS OF ABUSE

10.1 SIGNS OF POSSIBLE CHILD ABUSE

It is important to remember that lists such as the one below are neither completely definitive nor exhaustive. The information in such lists has to be used in the context of the child's whole situation and in combination with a range of other information related to the child and his/her circumstances.

There can be an overlap between all the different forms of child abuse, and all or several can co-exist.

i. PHYSICAL ABUSE

Signs of physical abuse:

Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent;

Improbable excuses given to explain injuries;

Refusal to discuss injuries;

Untreated injuries, or delay in reporting them;

Excessive physical punishment;

Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather;

Fear of returning home;

Aggression towards others;

Running away.

When considering the possibility of non-accidental injury it is important to remember that the injuries may have occurred for other reasons, eg genuine accidents or medical disorders.

ii. PHYSICAL NEGLECT

Signs of physical neglect:

Constant hunger;

Poor personal hygiene;

Constant tiredness;

Poor state of clothing;

Frequent lateness and/or unexplained non-attendance at school;

Untreated medical problems;

Low self-esteem;

Poor peer relationships;

Stealing.

iii. **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Signs of possible emotional abuse:

Low self-esteem;
Continual self-deprecation;
Sudden speech disorder;
Significant decline in concentration;
Socio-emotional immaturity;
“Neurotic” behaviour (eg rocking, head banging)
Self-mutilation;
Compulsive stealing;
Extremes of passivity or aggression;
Running away;
Indiscriminate friendliness.

iv. **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Signs of the sexually abused child:

Not all children are able to tell that they have been assaulted. Changes in behaviour may be a signal that something has happened.

These are general indicators that the child may be troubled though not necessarily about a sexual assault. The child may have some of these problems or none at all. It is the combination, frequency and duration of signs that will alert you to a problem. Try to notice all changes in usual behaviour.

It is important to remember that in sexual assault there may well be no physical or behavioural signs.

Signs of possible sexual abuse:

a) **BEHAVIOURAL**

Lack of trust in adults or over familiarity with adults;
Fear of a particular individual;
Social isolation - withdrawal or introversion;
Sleep disturbance (nightmares, irrational fears, bed-wetting, fear of sleeping alone, needing a nightlight);
Running away from home;
Girls taking over the mothering role;
Reluctance or refusal to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for

activities;
Low self-esteem;
Drug, alcohol or solvent abuse;
Display of sexual knowledge beyond child's years;
Unusual interest in the genitals of adults or children or animals;
Expressing affection in inappropriate ways eg "French kissing";
Fear of bathrooms, showers, closed doors;
Abnormal, sexualised drawing;
Fear of medical examinations;
Developmental regression;
Poor peer relations;
Over sexualised behaviour;
Compulsive masturbation;
Stealing;
Psychosomatic factors eg recurrent abdominal pain or headache;
Sexual promiscuity.

b) **PHYSICAL/MEDICAL**

Sleeplessness, nightmares, fear of the dark;
Bruises, scratches, bite marks to the thighs or genital areas;
Itch, soreness, discharge, unexplained bleeding from the rectum, vagina or penis;
Pain on passing urine or recurrent urinary infection;
Stained underwear;
Unusual genital odour;
Anxiety/depression;
Eating disorder eg anorexia nervosa or bulimia;
Discomfort/difficulty in walking or sitting;
Pregnancy - particularly when reluctant to name father;
Sexually transmitted infections;
Soiling or wetting in children who have been trained;
Self-mutilation/suicide attempts.

v. **NON-ORGANIC FAILURE TO THRIVE**

Signs of possible non-organic failure to thrive:

Significant lack of growth;

Weight loss;

Hair loss;

Poor skin or muscle tone;

Circulatory disorders.

11. ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR

WAYS IN WHICH ABUSE IN SCHOOLS MAY BE MANIFESTED

PHYSICAL

- Hitting/Tapping
- Holding/Restraint
- Pushing/Jabbing
- Missiles

EMOTIONAL

- Sarcasm
- Isolating
- Ignoring
- Unfavourable comparisons
- With-holding praise
- Threats
- Intimidation
- Berating
- Scapegoating
- Systematic personal criticism

SEXUAL

- Touching
- Suggestive remarks
- Suggestive gestures
- Flattery
- Innuendo
- Sexual Harassment
- Voyeurism,
- “Comforting”
- Suggestive materials

NEVER: Strike or raise hand; use implement; grab or pull clothing; touch inappropriately or contact whether “invited” or not.

AVOID: if you can, being alone with pupils; losing your temper and raising your voice unnecessarily; let pupils see or hear inappropriate professional behaviour.

WHERE POSSIBLE: Exercise careful professional discretion; put a space between yourself and pupils; share information with relevant staff.

APPENDIX A

CHILD PROTECTION at Queen Victoria School

Cause for concern form

To be completed by the member of staff who has the concern.

- If you have any doubts as to whether this pupil is a welfare or Child Protection concern, you should take advice from your Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- This form should be either handwritten or completed electronically, provided it is signed and dated in writing on the day.

Name of Pupil:	Year group/age:	House:
Please state nature of concern :		
Did the pupil disclose the matter to you? (If no, who did?)		
Has anyone else been informed of the concern raised? (If yes, please state)		

Please tick any relevant boxes from the Well Being Survey regarding your concerns.

Safe	
Healthy	
Achieving	
Nurtured	
Active	
Respected	
Responsible	
Included	

Comments:

Does the concern involve any of the following risk factors?

Concern	No	Yes
Domestic Abuse		
Parental Alcohol Misuse		
Parental Drug Misuse		
Non-Engaging Family		
Child affected by Parental Mental Health Problems		
Child Placing themselves at Risk		
Sexual Abuse		
Child Exploitation		
Physical Abuse		
Emotional Abuse		
Physical Neglect		
Other (please specify)		

Comments:

Name of Staff :	Signed:
Date:	Time:

Please ensure you have signed and passed this information to the Child Protection Co-ordinator as soon as possible and on the same working day.