



Child Protection Policy

CLF has a duty of care for all children and young people using our services. We take our responsibilities relating to child protection seriously.

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1. Introduction

CLF has a duty of care for all children and young people using our services. We take our responsibilities relating to child protection seriously.

1.2 This statement underpins our policy and will be displayed in our premises and in our publicity material as appropriate. We fully recognise the contribution we make to Child Protection and have implemented this policy to reflect our responsibilities and support.

1.3 Our policy applies to all permanent, temporary, casual and voluntary workers undertaking duties to provide our services. **The word ‘child’ throughout this document includes both children and young people less than 18 years of age.**

1.4 All children should be and feel safe on our premises and at our activities. Some of the children we work with are vulnerable. It is important to take any concerns we have seriously and deal with them appropriately. Our policy will assist this process and it will also help to protect our staff and our volunteers. We are often in a privileged position of trust with the children we work with as in most cases they have chosen to use our services. We need to be aware of this and the boundaries of that trust.

1.5 This policy aims to clarify roles and responsibilities, procedures and guidelines, documentation required, definitions and staff awareness, training and support. Child abuse and protection procedures can be difficult and unpleasant. This document aims to provide a framework to assist workers but it is important to remember to agree more detailed ways of working together within teams and raise any issue or concern with line managers or designated people. It is crucial to be clear and consistent and remove areas of discretion as far as possible.

1.6 **We want our staff and our services to have a protective ethos.**

The child’s welfare is paramount:

- All children whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Children should be respected and listened to

2. Our Responsibilities

2.1 CLF operate with the following values and principles when working with children:

- The safety and wellbeing of children and young people is paramount
- Children and young people should be listened to
- Children and young people and their cultures should be respected

2.2 CLF have a legal responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to Social Services or the Police.

- We must refer.
- We must not investigate.
- We cannot maintain confidentiality.
- We have to act on suspicions, facts and disclosures.

2.3 We will nominate designated people to make referrals and be available for advice and support.

2.4 Workers are not expected to know everything concerning child protection but your duty is to:

- be alert and responsive to problems and the potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- be alert and responsive to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children
- share and analyse information to enable informed assessments and good practice
- keep clear, detailed and accurate records
- discuss issues and concerns with line managers or designated people
- undertake appropriate behaviour and language
- ourselves and our colleagues for health, safety and security
- adhere to Uncle Phil's policies and procedures including the Code of Conduct

3. Designated People

3.1 The following are designated people for CLF who are trained to deal with Child Protection issues and make referrals. They should be contacted in the first instance and if they are not available follow the procedure set out in the section 'out of hours'.

Phillip McKinley

Errol Gayle

Designated people have the following responsibilities regarding the coordination of Child Protection issues:

- to receive concerns and disclosures made to workers
- to investigate allegations and make referrals to Social Services and/or the Police as necessary
- to participate in Social Services Child Protection procedures as necessary
- to support workers
- to ensure records are completed and filed confidentially
- to feedback appropriate information to staff on a 'need to know' basis

3.3 Designated Officers must ensure they are adequately trained to deal with Child Protection issues.

4. Confidentiality

4.1 It is very important to understand that we have to report any disclosures or suspicions of abuse or children at risk of abuse.

4.2 The child making a disclosure has trusted someone enough to confide in them. To avoid distrust, misunderstanding, we must be clear in our obligations to let the child know that if they tell us something we may have to act on it and tell someone else.

4.3 **It is important to encourage them to talk but it is essential that they know the limits of confidentiality.** If you promise confidentiality and then they disclose something you need to refer to Social Services, you will be breaking their trust and will put yourself in a difficult position.

4.4 We must always reserve the right to report child protection issues. We must refer any disclosures or suspicions of abuse.

- 4.5 Be honest with the child.
Reassure the child they have done the right thing.
Reassure the child you will do your best to get them support

5. What Do You Do If You Suspect Abuse?

- Don't keep it to yourself- discuss it with your line-manager or designated person immediately.
 - Complete a written record of your concerns using the 'Logging a concern' form. Included in the handbook (see Keeping Records).
 - If it is urgent and you cannot contact your manager or a designated person you must call social services or the police direct. (see Disclosure out of Hours and the Contact List)
- 5.1 Your line-manager or the designated person will support you, advise you on how to continue working with the child concerned and decide on action to be taken.
- 5.2 Child Protection is a very serious issue and all suspicions should be reported, regardless of how minor they may seem.
- If in doubt - ask. If there is no one to ask - act.
If you and your line-manager decide not to act - record your concerns anyway.
- 5.3 One small concern raised and noted may fit together with others concerns recorded centrally. Records will be held centrally to collate such information. (see Keeping Records)

6. What Do You Do if a Child Makes an Allegation of Abuse?

You must report the allegation made to a designated person or your line manager immediately. They will take the responsibility for making any referrals required.

- You must explain that you cannot keep the information confidential (see note on confidentiality).
- You should explain to the child that you are going to tell someone and explain who and why.
- The child is not always in a position to judge risks themselves and they have a right to protection.

6.1 The following are good practice guidelines when talking to the child:

- Avoid 'closed' or 'leading' questions - don't ask any more than you have to as this could prejudice an enquiry made by Social Services and/or the Police
- Be attentive, calm and reassuring
- Do not be judgmental
- Take the child seriously
- Avoid condemning the alleged abuser
- Avoid promises you cannot keep
- Don't make assumptions about the child's feelings
- Tell the child he/she is brave and right to tell - and it's not his/her fault
- Never promise to keep the abuse a secret
- Tell the child what will happen next
- Don't ask why
- Have time
- Tell the child they are not to blame

- 6.4 **DO NOT SEND THE CHILD HOME if they are at immediate risk
DO NOT CONTACT THE ALLEGED ABUSER
DO NOT INVESTIGATE - YOUR ROLE IS TO LISTEN AND REFLECT
Take advice from a Designated Officer, Social Services and/or the Police
Complete the appropriate record forms - see Keeping Records**

! once a referral has been made to the Social Services Department and/or the Police an enquiry may be undertaken. This may stop at any point if it is felt that there is insufficient evidence, otherwise it will follow established procedures if there is sufficient cause for concern.

7. Allegations Of Abuse 'Out Of Hours'

71. 'Out of hours' refers to times when the office is closed and normal communication links to your line manager or a designated person may not be available.

If at all possible refer disclosures to your manager and/or the designated person immediately. This may not always be possible, particularly for workers doing evening or weekend sessions.

If you cannot get hold of your manager or a designated person, you must contact Social Services or the Police direct. (See Contact Sheet).

Discuss individual procedures with your manager regarding your working practice to ensure you are confident in the approved, appropriate action for you to take regarding Child Protection issues.

WHEN MAKING A REFERRAL

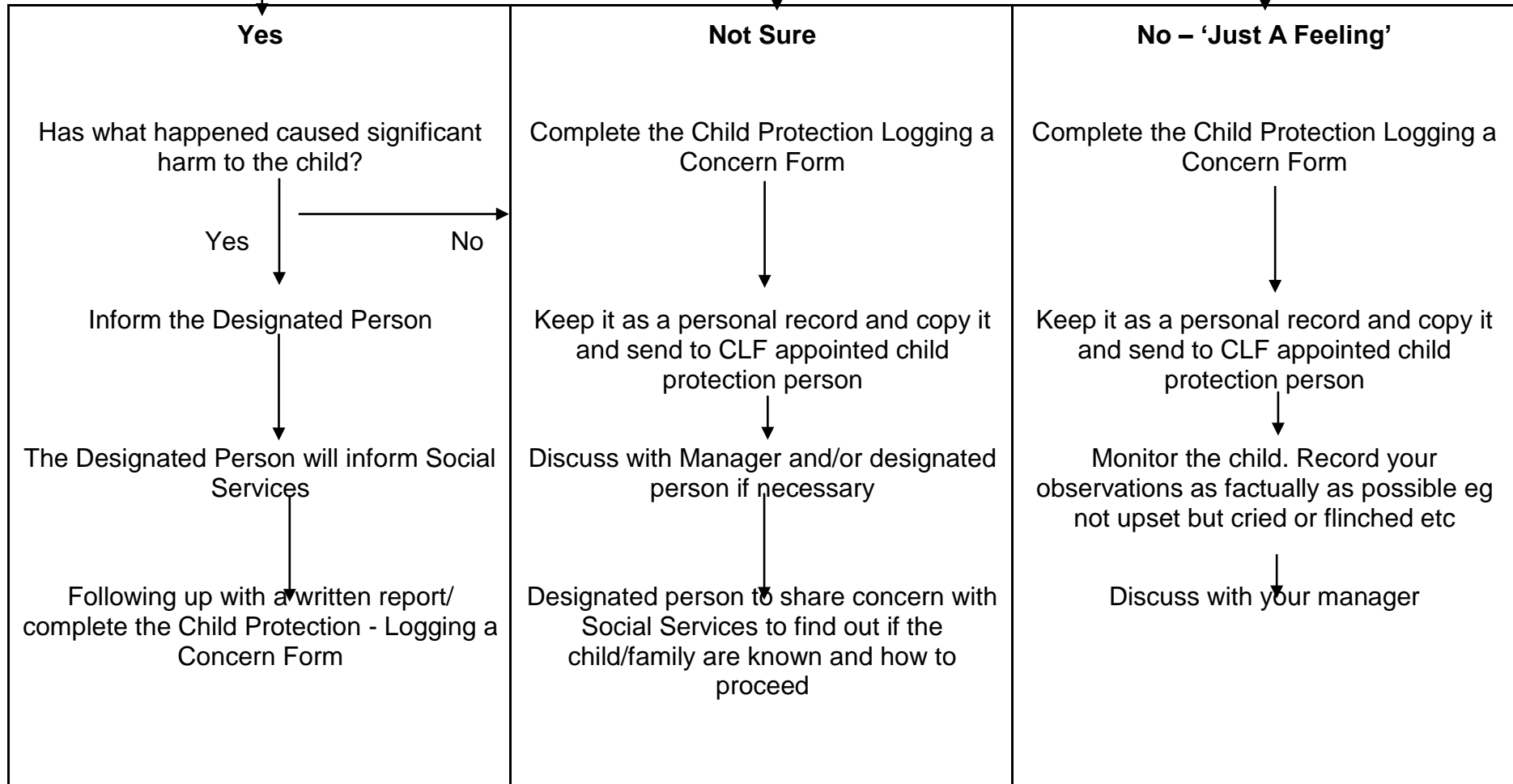
7.2 This is the task of the designated person or your line manager but if you are unable to contact them you will have to contact Social Services yourselves. Try to have as much information to hand as possible - but don't delay.

- your name, designation and contact number
- the child's name (or any names they have been previously known by), address, date of birth, age, sex, ethnic origin, language spoken, religion, school, names of parents/carers/GP/siblings - if available

Details of the disclosure or concerns

8. Something is Wrong - What Should I Do?

Has something actually happened?



9. What Happens Next?

9.1 At the point of contacting the police and/or social services then the Norfolk Area Child Protection Committee's Child Protection Procedures come into effect and manage the enquiry. Please see www.acpc.norfolk.gov.uk for details.

9.2 Our workers assist the Social services and/or Police enquiries as required and seek any help, advice or support they need from their line manager or designated person.

- Consideration will always be given to taking action designed to protect the child from abuse, and the effects on the child and their family caused by unnecessary interventions.
- The Social Services Department may have need to make an application to the Court for an order authorising the removal of the child from the environment where the alleged abuser lives or has contact with them. The Police have similar powers under Police Protection. This is, however, unusual and every attempt will be made to work in trust with the parents/carers to prevent further abuse occurring (or the likelihood).

10. Keeping Records

10.1 It is important to document your issues and concerns immediately. It may be a one-off note that never leads to any other concerns. It may be the start of a succession of incidents that give you cause for a greater concern and need to be taken further.

10.2 Attached is a form, 'Logging a Concern', to note anything that makes you think twice about a child's safety and welfare. It should be used to record a hunch, gut feeling, incident or disclosure. It is available as a template on computer or it can be completed manually using additional paper as required for each section or additional information.

10.3 Discuss anything you record with your Line Manager.

10.4 Sign the completed record and give to the Senior Children and youth worker, of CLF or in her absence the Community Development Manger. He/ She will assess information received across all our services.

10.5 The form helps focus on details, dates and information that may be required at a later date. Records must be clear, concise, and accurate, noting who made what decisions and took what action.

10.6 Complete forms immediately and clearly. Ensure what you have written would be understood by anyone reading it at any time.

10.7 Well kept records provide an essential underpinning to good child protection practice and are an essential source of evidence.

Information should include:

- the nature of the allegation
- a factual description of any visible bruising or other injuries, including colour of bruising, left/ Right. (Use skin maps if necessary)
- the child's account, if they can give it, of what has happened and how any injury has occurred
- any times, dates or other relevant information
- a clear distinction between fact, opinion or hearsay
- who has been involved and what action has been taken
- date and time of the record



**11. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE
Children & Youth Service**

Child Protection – Logging a Concern Form

Please complete all boxes

Project: (please circle)//// **other**

Place:

Venue:

Date of session: **Time of session:**

Date form completed:

Child's/ Young Persons full name: **Age:**

Additional relevant information from registration form (behavioural problem etc)

Your name: **Job title:**

Is this an incident / hunch / feeling?

Who was involved? Full names please

- 10 -

What happened / why are you concerned? The facts...

What did you do?

Who collected the child from the session?

Did you speak to the person who collected them? (Please give details – including what you said and why, their response / why you didn't speak to them)

What is your opinion (if relevant)?

Who have you passed this information to?

Name

Job title

This is a full and true record of events

Signed:

Office use only:

Form received by:

Date:

Action taken:

Case number:

new / existing

Signed:

12. Good Practice Guidelines

- 121 If you work with children you must accept that you are exposed to a certain level of risk.
- 122 It is impossible to cover every eventuality relating to the right or appropriate behaviour for every situation. Use your common sense, keep alert and discuss best practice with your manager and in teams - keep it on the agenda and don't put yourself at risk.
- 123 The following do's and don'ts will help clarification of what to do or not to do and generally raise your awareness and help protect yourself. If you have any particular concerns you must follow them up with your line manager or a designated person.

DO

- treat everyone with respect
- provide an example you wish others to follow
- plan activities which involve more than one other person being present, or at least which are within sight and hearing of others
- remember that someone may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling such as when dealing with bereavement, bullying or abuse
- keep in areas with plenty of witnesses
- keep colleagues informed - where you are, with whom, for what purpose
- avoid physical contact where possible
- Avoid being in a room alone with a child and if it is unavoidable ensure the child is between you and the door. Use rooms with windows.
- keep records of concerns - complete the logging a concern form
- discuss even the slightest concern with your manager
- ask for further guidance on anything you are unclear about
- feel confident to challenge any behaviour of colleagues that could compromise them
- Report any inappropriate behaviour of colleagues to your line-manager, or of your line-manager, to the Chief Executive of Uncle Phil's.

- appreciate your colleagues looking out for you
- help create a protective ethos and culture within our working environment and the services we provide
- discuss any support or training needs you have with your manager
- remember you cannot promise confidentiality
- ensure both male and female workers accompany trips that include both male and female children
- act as if you are always being filmed
- ensure ratios are good enough to enable appropriate supervision/staff protection

DO NOT

- put yourself into a situation that could be misinterpreted, a place that cannot be seen or work alone with children and young people
- permit abusive activities
- play overly physical contact games with children (tag is ok - Twister isn't)
- have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
- jump to conclusions about others without checking out the facts
- allow yourself to be drawn in to any attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes
- exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual or have a 'best friend'
- make suggestive remarks or gestures
- rely on your good name to protect you
- believe 'it could never happen to me'
- lock doors
- encourage or participate in any avoidable out of work situations with children you work with
- share a room with a child on trips

- establish a relationship with children out of the work situation

CONTACT:

124 You cannot NOT touch children when you work with them, but use your common sense. Avoid physical contact wherever possible and where you cannot, always be able to justify 'why did you do that, in that way?' You need to make reasonable judgements for safety and care situations. Activities that need careful attention, justification and common sense include:

- **helping children with clothes:** encourage them to put them on themselves, help only when essential and with witnesses
- **Comforting distressed children:** justify the contact, let others know, have witnesses, keep it short term. Keep your hands visible
- **Appropriate affection:** wherever possible use verbal encouragement, state your feelings, praise, smiling etc. If a child does not get affection at home, do not make the mistake of over compensating when they are with you. Children need to know the difference between what is appropriate with a parent and what is appropriate with a known other person or with a stranger
- **protecting a child from hurting themselves or others / physical intervention:** intervene carefully if essential with others present wherever possible
- **first aid:** get the child to remove any necessary clothing or have a witness present and wherever practical take the first aid to the child

If a child touches you, or attaches themselves to you as a special friend, or has a crush on you - you must inform your manager and encourage them to be less tactile and understand that their behaviour is inappropriate - set clear boundaries with the child. You need to agree appropriate strategies with your manager to deal with this and keep people aware of progress

- **Escorting children:** try to avoid but if essential then ensure two people escort and that your manager knows when you are collecting children and your expected time of arrival at your destination. If you use a taxi, ensure you sit in the front and put the child in the back
- **Lateness:** if a child is continuously late being picked up make sure it is never the same person being left to supervise the child. Raise the issue with the parents
- **!working with children with disabilities:** many of the same needs arise as detailed above, clothes, physical help, accidents etc. Use your

Common sense, make sure there are witnesses and remember the needs of the child must come first

125 Children in difficult situations may show their distress through inappropriate sexual behaviour. This needs to be reported.

13. Allegations against Workers

131 Allegations against workers are dealt with by Uncle Phil's disciplinary procedures process and may run parallel with Child Protection Procedures if applicable. The procedure is the same for all workers. We appreciate that staff need support through such incidences and will endeavour to keep the member of staff informed and offer sources of support for them.

132 As part of the process the member of staff is likely to be suspended to enable a full investigation to be undertaken - this is not confirmation of guilt but to protect the worker. For the individual this can feel like punishment and belief in the accuser - BUT THIS IS NOT THE CASE - it is just the procedure. Confidentiality in the work place is important to enable workers to return to work in the best possible environment if the allegations do not lead to dismissal.

133 If you are a member of a Union you may wish to contact them for advice, support or representation as required.

134 If an allegation is made to you about a colleague you must listen, make notes and consult a designated person immediately. Keep an open mind even if the allegation made is about a colleague you know professionally or socially.

135 There are several possibilities when an allegation is made against a worker:

- The allegation is unfounded and malicious
- The allegation is unfounded but not malicious: there has been a misunderstanding
- The allegation is unfounded in relation to the person named, but the child has been abused by someone else
- The allegation has some foundation but the worker was naive or lacking in social skills rather than intentionally abusive - counselling, advice or training may be required and the situation will need monitoring
- The allegation is founded and can be proved beyond reasonable doubt eg for prosecution
- The allegation is founded, cannot be proved beyond reasonable doubt but can be proved 'on the balance of possibilities' (e.g. for disciplinary action / dismissal). Uncle Phil's disciplinary procedures are different from any

Police investigation and there may be employment implications even if there is no police prosecution

- The allegation is founded in the judgement of investigating professionals but there is insufficient or no evidence to corroborate the child/adult's statement.

14. Support And Supervision - Who Can I Talk To?

14.1 Working in the field of potential child protection issues means making difficult professional judgements. It is demanding and can be distressing and stressful. Get access to advice and support from managers, peers or designated people as appropriate. You cannot make everything better for a child in distress.

14.2 As stated in the procedures you must report concerns and disclosures to a designated person and/or your line manager to act as necessary.

It is not necessary for anyone else to know, but it is important that you get any support you need.

- you can continue discussions with the designated person and/or your line manager
- Your line manager can arrange additional support themselves.

14.4 Effective management supervision of those involved in day-to-day work with children is important to promoting good standards of practice and individual support to individual members of staff. Supervision should help to ensure practice is soundly based and consistent with procedures. It should reinforce that staff understand their roles, responsibilities and the scope of their professional discretion and authority.

Knowing your role and resources will help you get a realistic view on the limits of your responsibilities.

Union members may wish to consult with their trade union for advice and support.

If you talk to family and friends you must not give information that would identify individuals.

15. Training

15.1 With the implementation of this policy a training package will be developed to raise awareness of Child Protection for all front line staff. Managers will take the responsibility to brief new workers as necessary and arrange any

Additional training requirements for the post holder as part of the Induction Programme for individuals.

- 152 Managers need to identify training and development needs of staff to ensure each has the skill and understanding to fulfil their responsibilities.

16. Recruitment

16.1 There is a comprehensive set of recruitment and selection procedures which managers must adhere to and they need to ensure that other considerations are given to deter those who are unsuitable to work with children. These would include:

- completed application forms
- Criminal Record Bureau checks
- professional register check, if appropriate
- ask candidates to confirm their identity through official documents
- verifying the authenticity of qualifications and reference directly
- seeking a full employment history reserving the right to approach any previous employer; checking with former employers the reason why employment ended; identifying any gaps or inconsistencies and seeking an explanation
- Making appointments only after references are obtained and checked. Referees should be reminded that references should contain no material miss-statement or omission to the relevant to the suitability of the applicant
- making all appointments to work with children (preferably including internal transfers) subject to a six month probationary period

16.2 Managers will plan recruitment literature and interview questions to highlight our policy and protective ethos. Interviews should be prepared to explore with candidates their attitudes towards children and childcare, their perceptions about boundaries, and questions about sexual boundaries and attitudes. Candidates should be told that we have a commitment to child protection.

16.3 Even the most careful selection process cannot identify all those who may pose a risk to children. Post-employment management and supervision should always be alert to indicators of untoward behaviour.

17. Protective Ethos

17.1 Help each other to protect ourselves from allegations. If you see a colleague doing something that causes you concern - tell their manager or them direct. This is not seen as telling tales but as helping those not to leave themselves open to allegation. We can all be naive at times. Raise awareness amongst each other.

17.2 If in doubt about how your actions towards a child may appear - don't do it.

- 17.3 Build on good practice and be knowledgeable about child protection issues and procedures.
- 17.4 Use your common sense.
- 17.5 Discuss child protection at team meetings and work together on issues to build a team approach.
- 17.6 Share experiences and good practice with others to continue to raise awareness, obviously maintaining any necessary confidentiality.
- 17.7 Display the policy statement in venues and in publicity material and documents as appropriate.
- 17.8 Create an ethos of maximum respect by actively building esteem, actively building the child's ability to be assertive, and actively listen to children's' concerns.
- 17.9 Teach children about personal safety and help them assess risks. Model and teach appropriate physical space.
- 17.10 Be alert to any changes in the child's physical appearance, behaviour and emotional state.

18. Risk Assessment

All buildings, events and services risk assessments will consider child protection as a standard item.

19. Review

- 19.1 This policy will be reviewed and updated annually by the Uncle Phil's Management Team. Please pass on any comments you have to your line manager to feed into the review process.

APPENDIX A

The Child Protection Procedures – taken from the ACPC website

Professional Consultation

All ACPC agencies have designated advisers with whom to discuss concerns. Please remember:

- Never delay emergency action to protect a child
- Always record in writing concerns about a child's welfare whether or not further action is taken, and record the reasons following a particular course of action
- At the close of a discussion always reach a clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action and the agreed timescales.

Referrals to the Social Services Department

When the social services department are contacted with concerns about a child's welfare it is their responsibility to clarify the nature of the concerns with the referrer. This will include defining:

- How and why the concerns have arisen
- The needs of the child and family.

The referrer will be asked to clearly identify whether there are concerns about abuse or neglect, the evidence for these concerns and whether the children may need urgent action to make them safe from harm. A professional referral to social services must be followed up in writing within 24 hours.

Upon receipt of information which indicates the likely need for a child protection enquiry the social worker will gather and record background information including:

- Checking the Child Protection Register
- Identifying the other agencies or persons who may be expected to hold relevant information
- Consulting with other statutory agencies
- Consulting with their line manager.

Whenever there is suspicion that a crime may have been committed e.g. sexual or physical assault, or neglect, social services will **always** notify the Police without delay.

Within 24 hours social services will consider the available evidence and decide how and when to proceed.

If at any stage in the assessment the need for enquiries under S 47 of the Children Act 1989 is indicated these will be started immediately.

Unless there are clearly established concerns about significant harm which indicate the need for immediate protection, social services will carry out an initial assessment under S17. This will be done in trust with the family and other agencies who have

Knowledge of the family or who may be able to provide services relevant to their needs.

If social services decide to take no further action, feedback will be provided to the referrer. In the case of referrals from members of the public this can only be done in a manner consistent with respecting the confidentiality of the child and family.

Initial Assessment under S17 and S47

The initial assessment by the social services department of all children in need, whether or not there are child protection concerns, should be completed within seven working days of the date of the referral. However if there is reasonable cause to suspect that this child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, the initial assessment period may be very brief and S47 enquiries will be made.

Using the “Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families” the initial assessment will ask:

- What are the needs of the child and is this a child in need? (S.17 of the Children Act 1989).
- Are the parents able to respond appropriately to the child’s needs?
- Is the child being adequately safeguarded from significant harm?
- Are the parents able to promote the child’s health and development?
- Is action needed to promote the child’s welfare?

The focus of the initial assessment will be on the welfare of the child. However if the reason for the referral was concern about abuse or neglect which is not subsequently substantiated, consideration will still be given to whether a family may benefit from support and practical help to promote a child’s welfare and development.

If, at any stage in the process, it is clear that a child needs specific services, provision should be explored without delay.

Decisions following an initial assessment can lead to the following options:

- No further action
- Immediate provision of services either directly or indirectly
- Referral to another agency
- Strategy discussion or immediate protection

An initial assessment may reveal that a crime has been committed. If this is the case it must be reported to the police without delay.

Strategy Discussion

If there are concerns that a child may be suffering significant harm a strategy discussion will take place between social services, the police and any other relevant agency. This will normally take place within 2 working days of the referral. The purpose of the discussion is to agree whether S47 enquiries are required and if so to develop a plan of action. Where a medical examination may be needed, consideration should be given to involving a senior doctor from the providing service in the discussion. The strategy discussion will share information and consider:

- Who will be interviewed, by whom, for what purpose and when
- Who will see the child
- Any issues arising from disability, race and ethnicity of the child and family
- The needs of any other child who may be affected
- What immediate action may be needed to safeguard the child and/or provide interim services and support
- What information about the strategy discussion will be shared with the family (unless such information sharing may place a child at risk of significant harm or jeopardise police investigations into an alleged offence)
- Issues of staff safety.

Immediate Protection

There will be occasions when information received by either the social services or the police suggests the need for immediate action to protect a child. Such action should normally be preceded by an immediate strategy discussion. In this case the urgency of the situation may limit the opportunity for inter-agency consultation.

The police, social services or NSPCC are able to take or initiate independent emergency action to protect a child at any stage in their enquiries. This will usually be achieved by the police invoking their powers of Police Protection or social services seeking an Emergency Protection Order. However, there are alternative forms of emergency protection available i.e.

- Assisting the alleged abuser to reside elsewhere
- The child being accommodated by protective members of the extended family
- A non-abusing parent initiating private law proceedings to exclude an alleged abuser from the family home
- Assisting the child and non-abusing parent to live elsewhere, or
- The Police effecting the arrest and custody of the alleged abuser.

S.47 Enquiries

S.47 of the Children Act requires social services to make enquiries to determine whether action is needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child.

Those making enquiries will also be alert to the needs and safety of:

- Siblings
- Other children in the household and
- Children in other households with whom the alleged offender may have had contact.

The overall task of the enquiry is to assess the needs of the child and the capacity of the parent or wider family network adequately to ensure their safety, health and development.

The enquiry will:

- Decide the need for immediate protection

- Establish the facts about the circumstances which led to the concern, taking into account:
 - the views of the child
 - the views of the parent/carer
- Decide if there is evidence to support the concern
- Identify the probable source of the harm
- Assess the level of current and future risk
- Identify other children who may be at risk
- Establish whether a Child Protection Conference is required
- Establish whether services can be provided under s.17.

Enquiries **will always** involve separate interviews with a child of sufficient age and understanding.

At the same time the police will need to establish the facts and collect evidence about any offence that may have been committed against a child.

Where a child may have a case to pursue with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority they will be counselled to obtain legal advice (in the case of a “looked after” child this will be through the County Council Legal Services).

The Outcome of S47 Enquiries

S 47 Enquiries will result in three possible outcomes:

1. Concerns are not substantiated.
However enquiries may reveal a range of needs for which services are required.
2. Concerns are substantiated but the child is not judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm.

It may be that even when concerns are substantiated, a plan for ensuring the child’s future safety and welfare can be implemented without the need for a Child Protection Conference. In this case a Family Support Conference will be held.

The decision to hold a Family Support Conference will be made by social services in consultation with those agencies most involved and discussion with the child and family (see Family Support Conferences page 38).

3. Concerns **are** substantiated and the child is judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm. Where the agencies most involved judge this to be the case, the social services department will convene a Child Protection Conference.

Another agency may disagree with social services decision not to hold a Child Protection Conference. Following a formal request, endorsed by a manager with child protection responsibilities, a conference will normally be held.

If there has been a significant change of circumstances (e.g. a perpetrator has

Permanently left the household), social services may decide there is neither the need for a child protection conference nor a family support conference.

Child Protection Conferences

The aim of the Child Protection Conference is to enable professionals with particular expertise, those most involved with the child and family, the family itself and the child (where appropriate), to assess all relevant information and plan how to safeguard the child and promote his or her welfare.

Child Protection conferences will be chaired by an independent chairperson who has received training to undertake this task.

Explanatory leaflets will be made available to parents prior to Child Protection Conference. These will advise parents and children on the purpose and nature of the conference and give information on complaints procedures.

The Initial Child Protection Conference

The purpose of the Initial Child Protection Conference is:

- To collate and analyse, in an inter-agency setting, the information which has been obtained about the child's health, development and functioning
- To consider the parents' or carers' capacity to ensure the child's safety and promote his or her health and development
- To make judgements about the likelihood of a child suffering significant harm in the future
- To decide what future action is needed to safeguard the child and promote his or her welfare, how that action will be taken forward and with what intended outcomes.

The Initial Child Protection Conference will be held within 15 working days of the strategy meeting which initiates S47 enquiries.

The Initial Child Protection Conference must decide whether a child's name will be placed on the Child Protection Register. This will be the case if the conference decides **the child is at continuing risk of significant harm.**

The test is that either:

- a) The child can be shown to have suffered ill treatment or impairment of health or development as a result of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, and professional judgement is that further ill-treatment or impairment is likely **or**
- b) Professional judgement, substantiated by the findings of enquiries in this individual case or by research evidence, is that the child is likely to suffer ill treatment or the impairment of health and development as a result of physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect.

The child may be registered under one or more of the following categories - emotional harm, physical harm, sexual abuse or neglect. The chair will determine which category.

If the decision is to register the child or children the conference will:

- Identify a named key worker (from the social services department)
- Identify a Core Group
- Formulate the child protection plan, including:
 - the framework for a core assessment,
 - timescale for action and by whom,
 - contingency plans and
 - schedule the first core group meeting and subsequent frequency
 - Book a date for the child protection review conference.

The Child Protection Plan

The aim of the plan is to:

- Safeguard the child from future harm
- Promote the child's health and development
- Support the family to promote the welfare of their child provided it is in the best interests of the child
- Plan the work to be carried out in order to achieve de-registration.
The child protection plan sets out what work is to be done, for what purpose, when and by whom. The plan should:
- Describe the identified needs of the child and what therapeutic services are required
- Include specific, achievable, child focused objectives intended to safeguard the child and promote his or her welfare
- Include realistic strategies and specific actions to achieve the objectives
- Clearly identify roles and responsibilities of professionals and family members, including the nature and frequency of contact by professionals with children and family members
- Define points at which progress will be reviewed and the means by which progress will be judged
- Clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of those professionals with routine contact with the child as well as any targeted support to the child and family.

Key Worker

The key worker is a social worker responsible for:

- Convening the core group within agreed timescales
- Making sure the outline child protection plan is developed into a detailed inter agency plan
- Completing the core assessment which addresses the needs of the child and the capacity of their parents to respond appropriately to these needs within the wider family and community context - (see Core Assessment section below)
- Acting as a lead worker for inter-agency work
- Co-ordinating the contributions of the family and other agencies to effect the child protection plan.

- Reviewing progress against the objectives set out in the plan.

The Core Group

The core group will meet within 10 working days of the initial case conference and is jointly responsible for developing the child protection plan and implementing it. The core group will meet sufficiently regularly to facilitate effective working together, monitor actions and outcomes against the child protection plan and make any necessary changes as circumstances evolve.

Membership includes:

- Key worker
- The child (if appropriate)
- Family members
- Relevant professionals and foster carers.

The Child Protection Review Conference

This takes place once a child's name is placed on the Child Protection Register. The first review must be within 3 months of the Initial Child Protection Conference and thereafter at a maximum of 6 monthly intervals.

The core group may bring forward a review conference if it feels that the child protection plan is not working or there is a significant change of circumstances such as non-co-operation of parents or threats of violence to staff. The first review will examine the outcome of the core assessment.

The purpose of the child protection review conference is to:

- Review the safety, health and development of the child against intended outcomes identified in the child protection plan
- Ensure that the child continues to be adequately safeguarded
- Consider whether the child protection plan should continue or be changed
- Consider whether the child continues to be at risk of significant harm and if not to decide on the removal of that child's name from the register
- Consider what services and support the family may still require after the child's name has been removed from the register.
A child's name may be removed from the register if:
 - it is judged the child is no longer at continuing risk of significant harm requiring safeguarding by means of a child protection plan e.g. the risk of harm has been reduced by action taken through the child protection plan, the child and Family's circumstances have changed, or re-assessment of the child and family indicates that a child protection plan is not necessary. Under these circumstances, only a child protection review conference can decide that registration is no longer necessary or
 - The child and family have moved permanently to another local authority area. In such cases, the receiving local authority should convene a Child Protection Conference within 15 working days of being notified of the move, only after which event may de-registration take place in respect of the original local

Authority's child protection
register or

- The child has reached 18 years of age, has died or has permanently left the UK.

APPENDIX B

Definitions Of Abuse

The following categories and descriptions help understand the different types of abuse that can cause significant harm to a child or young person.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE FOR REGISTRATION

Neglect includes not only poor physical care and inattention to the child's basic needs, e.g. for regular feeding, cleanliness and clothing, but also a failure to provide the necessary stimulation to sustain behavioural and emotional development.

Physical Injury includes actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocating and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy. Seemingly trivial injuries should not be ignored because abuse can and does sometimes escalate if it goes unchecked.

Sexual Abuse includes actual or likely exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature. Both male and female children may be sexually abused by adults or older children. Sexual abuse can occur without any physical contact e.g. being forced to watch sexual activity. Children may also be made to take part in pornographic activity.

Emotional Abuse includes sustained and repeated responses to the child or the child's behaviour which are so negative, inconsistent, rejecting or inappropriate that the child shows serious difficulties in emotional, social or behavioural development. What makes the parental behaviour abusive is that it typifies the relationship with the child. It is thus not usually indicated by a specific incident but is observed in the interaction with the child, and the ongoing relationship between child and parents(s). One child may be scape goated or treated completely differently to his or her siblings.

These categories do not tie in exactly with legal definitions of 'significant harm' which may be used in Court proceedings. eg 'sexual abuse' is not defined in the Children's Act. Where there is a difference in interpretation, the Courts' definition will be used.

APPENDIX C

Signs Of Abuse

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Improbable explanations for injuries
- Untreated injuries or lingering illness not attended to
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Shrinking from physical contact
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Fear of undressing
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression / bullying
- Over compliant behaviour or a 'watchful attitude'
- Running away
- Significant changes in behaviour without explanation
- Deterioration in work
- Unexplained pattern of absences which may serve to hide bruises or other physical injuries.

Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

- Continual self-deprecation
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Self-harm or mutilation
- Compulsive stealing / scrounging
- Drug / solvent abuse
- 'Neurotic' behaviour - obsessive rocking, thumb-sucking, and so on
- Air of detachment – 'don't care' attitude
- Social isolation - does not join in and has few friends
- Desperate attention - seeking behaviour
- Eating problems, including overeating and lack of appetite
- Depression, withdrawal

Possible Signs of Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationship

- Compulsive stealing or scrounging
- Constant tiredness

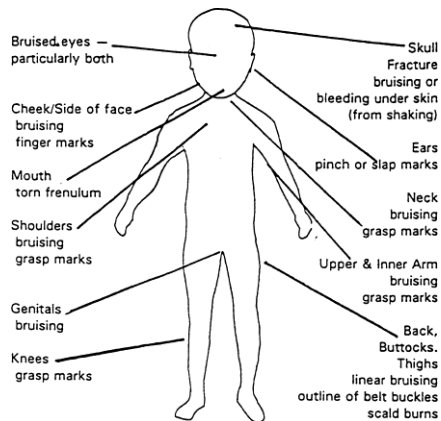
Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on the body
- Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions
- Pregnancy - particularly in the case of young adolescents who are evasive concerning the identity of the father
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age - shown, for example, in drawing, vocabulary, games and so on
- Frequent public masturbation
- Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity
- Refusing to stay with certain people or go to certain places
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness
- Withdrawal from friends

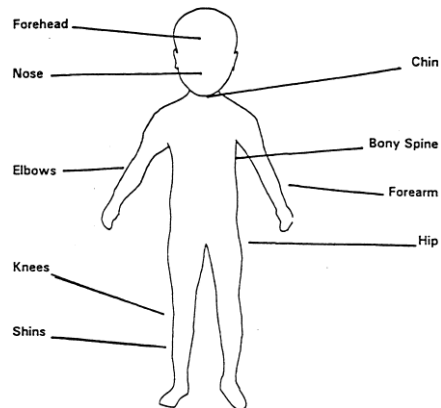
Possible Signs in Older Children

- Promiscuity, prostitution, provocative sexual behaviour
- Self-injury, self-destructive behaviour, suicide attempts
- Eating disorders
- Tiredness, lethargy, listlessness
- Over-compliant behaviour
- Sleep disturbances
- Unexplained gifts of money
- Depression
- Changes in behaviour

Common sites for non-accidental injuries



Common sites for accidental injuries



Non-accidental Injuries

Bruises likely to be:

- ! frequent
 - ! patterned eg finger and thumb marks
 - ! old and new in the same place (note colour)
 - ! in unusual position (see chart)
- consider:
- ! developmental level of child and their activities
 - ! may be more difficult to see on darker skins

Burns and scalds likely to be:

- ! clear outline
- ! splash marks around the burn area
- ! unusual position eg back of hand
- ! indicative shapes eg cigarette burns, bar of electric fire

Injuries suspicious if:

- ! bite marks
- ! fingernail marks
- ! large and deep scratches
- ! incisions eg from blade

Fractures likely to be:

- ! multiple - healed at different time
- consider: age of child (always suspicious in babies under two years old) and any delay in seeking treatment

Sexual abuse may result in:

- ! unexplained soreness, bleeding or injury to genital or anal area
- ! sexually transmitted diseases, eg warts, gonorrhoea

Accidental Injuries

Bruises likely to be:

- ! few but scattered
 - ! no pattern
 - ! same colour and age
- consider:
- ! age and activity of child eg learning to walk
 - ! may be confused with birthmarks or other skin conditions (eg Mongolian blue spot)

Burns and scalds likely to be:

- ! treated
- ! easily explained
- ! may be confused with other conditions, eg impetigo, nappy rash

Injuries likely to be:

- ! Minor and superficial
- ! treated
- ! easily explained

Fractures likely to be:

- ! of arms and legs
- ! seldom of ribs except for Road Traffic Accidents
- ! rare in very young children
- ! may rarely be due to 'brittle bone syndrome'

Genital area:

- ! Injury may be accidental (seek expert opinion)
- ! soreness may be nappy rash or irritation eg from bubble bath
- ! anal soreness may be due to constipation or threadworm infestation

Parental attitude is important in assessing all of the above - when a child is

suffering severe and painful injury most would seek medical help

Appendix D

THE CHILD PROTECTION ENQUIRY PROCESS

– Norfolk Area Child Protection Committee

