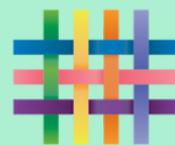


ann marie christian

bringing safeguarding to life 



TAPESTRY
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JOURNAL

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SAFEGUARDING

This free document has been created to support childminders, nurseries and schools in having necessary conversations about safeguarding.

SAFEGUARDING

CONTENTS

What is Safeguarding?

3

Who Harms Children?

4

What is the Member of Staff's Role?

5

The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

6

Examples of Abuse

7

What Do I Do?

8

Acronyms and Resources

9

SAFEGUARDING

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding is a proactive word we use to refer to the frameworks we have in place to reduce harm to children, for example: safer recruitment, health and safety, teaching safeguarding in the curriculum, listening and reporting culture, safeguarding induction, training, policies, protocol and procedures. The setting must have a Child Protection Policy, Designated Safeguarding Lead (also known as DSL) and a deputy DSL, and vet all members of staff who work or volunteer as the setting by completing the correct DBS.

Safeguarding is in place to support children against acts of ill-treatment that are designed to harm or negatively affect a child or young person's development. These can be sexual, emotional, or physical. Neglect is considered a type of abuse, and it can be defined as not providing a child or young person with the basic needs of a safe and secure environment, including appropriate supervision from adults providing care.

WHAT IS CHILD PROTECTION?

Child protection is a part of the safeguarding process, and it involves working to protect the individual children who are most at risk of suffering. This includes developing policies, procedures and protocols that will help address concerns about a child and instruct staff in what to do. All staff working with children must be taught through training in their induction what the procedures are in the organisation and who the DSL is. This training is renewed every year and staff are updated with changes to remind them what to do if they are concerned about a child or adult member of staff.

SAFEGUARDING

WHO HARMS CHILDREN?

Children can be subject to harm and abused by adults or children, including online. They may not be aware at the time it is harmful. They may feel uncomfortable, scared and not sure what to do. The person harming them is often known to them. Often after the event the child may realise the behaviour was abusive and feel the need to tell someone. They sometimes show these signs through their own behaviours, play or conversations. Most children are not aware they are experiencing abuse or harm when they are abused.

Children in our settings can often display signs they have been harmed. It is important that we all attend annual child protection training as it helps us to spot the signs a child has been abused or at risk of harm.

Common scenarios:

- Care givers cannot meet the basic needs of the child due to substance misuse, mental health, domestic abuse or lack the knowledge of meeting the basic needs of a baby or child.
- Children living in homes where they have been exposed to domestic abuse.
- Child subject to sexual harm by another child or adult.
- And much more that you will learn on child protection training.

SAFEGUARDING

WHAT IS THE MEMBER OF STAFF'S ROLE?

Being aware of the signs of abuse can help you respond well to situations involving a child or young person. Having regular child protection training upskills us on what to do and how to report it.

Staff who work in a maintained nursery or education establishment in England must read part one of the Department for Education's 'Keeping children safe in education 2022' (often revised). This is a statutory requirement. Their role is clearly stated in reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and includes attending at least annual training.

Our role is to listen to a child who shares something with us and explain to them that they have done the right thing by telling us. Do not ask leading questions or speculate. We cannot promise confidentiality and must tell the DSL immediately. Children can also communicate distress in their behaviours or pictures and stories of concern. This also needs to be shared with the DSL.

SAFEGUARDING

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

- Refer suspected child abuse to children's services or the police depending on the urgency.
- Act as the setting safeguarding lead and take responsibility for managing child abuse and safeguarding matters.
- Attend twice yearly specific Designated Safeguarding Lead training specified by the local authority procedures.
- Multi-agency working with the police, children's services, health, and the voluntary sector.
- Partnership working with parents and stakeholders.
- Refer suspicions of any crime to the police.
- Act as a source of support for staff who have safeguarding concerns.
- Record safeguarding concerns in a safe and secure place and be highly confidential.
- Raise the awareness of child abuse and how to report it.
- Ensure all staff attend child protection training and familiarise them with the child protection policy so they have the correct knowledge.
- Have a child-centred approach in safeguarding children.
- Understand confidentiality and information sharing.

SAFEGUARDING

EXAMPLES OF ABUSE

There are four categories of abuse: Physical, Emotional, Neglect and Sexual (PENS) as defined in the Department for Education's, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', 2018.

A young person needs love, attention and care to thrive, and a lack or absence of this can be caused by physical abuse. This can be carried out through hitting, burning, throwing, punching, pinching and other forms of punishment.

A pattern of bruises on a child's lower legs might have happened accidentally whilst playing - this can also happen on areas such as elbows and knees. If a child has unexplained injuries however, they can provide clues about what may be happening to the child. All bruises on any part of the body must be reported to the DSL who leads on child protection decision making.

An emotional abuse is a type of behaviour that involves being disrespectful, being put through humiliation, and withholding affection and love. It can make a child feel like they are worthless or unloved. Other forms of emotional abuse can also be involved, such as intimidation, harassment, and coercion.

Neglect can be defined as not providing a child or young person with the basic needs of a safe and secure environment. It can also include failing to provide them with adequate food, shelter, and clothing.

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is forced or enticed into performing sexual activities. This can be either online or in person. It can also involve the taking of photos or videos of the child, being groomed for these activities, and being filmed.

SAFEGUARDING

WHAT DO I DO?

Talk to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately about any concerns that you might have and follow it up in writing by completing a concern form, following the policy of your school or setting. Use a body map to support your recording if necessary. A body map is a simple outline of a body, on which you can indicate where you have seen any troubling marks on a child's actual body, or indicate where a child has said something has happened to them on their body.

The DSL is responsible for keeping track of all the details of the incident and ensuring that the child is kept safe and is receiving the best possible care. Even if it's just a minor issue, it's important to talk to them about it. They have been trained in how to act on the concern.

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SAFEGUARDING

ACRONYMS

Thresholds: When the threshold of significant harm is met for a social work assessment

CP: Child Protection

Section 47: Thresholds of a child protection social work assessment (Section 47 The Children Act 1989)

CIN: Child in need assessment (Section 17 The Children Act 1989)

CIN Plan: Child in need plan

LADO: Local Authority Designated Officer (deals with allegations against staff)

Early Help supports: Support offered by a provision (local authority or organisation) when threshold of CIN or CP is not met

MASH: Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (Children's Services who make decisions about child protection thresholds. Team of multi-agency professionals - health, police & social workers)

DBS: Disclosure and Barring Service (police checks and barred list checks service who check individuals are suitable to work with children)

RESOURCES

Department for Education: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', 2022 (first published in 2014 and revised almost annually)

Department for Education: 'What to do if you are worried about a child', 2015

Department for Education: 'Working Together to Safeguard children', 2018