Child Protection

The role of every adult

Child Protection

A School Overview

- This is not an easy subject to talk about but it is an important one to know about.
- This is a session to raise your awareness and provide you with general Child Protection Training.
- There may be issues that are raised that some people may be uncomfortable with (for a variety of reasons).

Objectives and Outcomes

- To provide an opportunity to explore values in relation to child abuse.
- To provide basic child protection information for education staff.
- To know what to do if you have concerns about a child (or young person).
- To consider safeguarding children and safe working practices for adults in school.

Child Protection

Key incidents and reports have heightened awareness that all organisations need cultures and systems which protect children.

- Fred and Rosemary West
- Soham murders
- Victoria Climbie/Lord Laming’s Report, etc.
- Baby P

“Every Child Matters”

- Incorporated into the Children Act 2004
- Every child is entitled to expect these outcomes:
  - Staying safe
  - Being healthy
  - Enjoying and achieving
  - Experiencing economic well-being
  - Making a positive contribution

Child Protection

Children in Need in England

11 million children in England

27,000 on Child Protection Register
50,000 Looked After Children
3 – 400,000 Children in Need
4,000,000 Vulnerable Children
Question

- Which form of abuse do you think has the greatest prevalence?

Is Abuse a significant problem?

- At least 15,000 children annually suffer severe physical punishment
- Up to 10,000 each year have a potentially harmful sexual experience
- 350,000-400,000 children live in an atmosphere low in warmth and high in criticism
- 450,000 are bullied at school once a week

Lauren Wright

- Died in 2000 aged 10
- Attended school regularly
- Her step-mother was employed by the school
- It was a small village school with 2 teachers, one of which was the Head teacher
- When the designated person for child protection left they were replaced by an NQT who could not be the DP
- No effective procedures

Activity

- Discuss why you believe a child needs to be well safeguarded
- What factors may prevent any carer’s ability to safeguard?

What is Child Abuse?

Identification of child abuse is difficult. It requires social and medical assessment.

Aspects of abuse are:
- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse

Who are the Abusers?

Abusers can be:
- Any age
- Male or female (including sexual abusers)
- From any social class
- “Nice” people
- Working in “helpful” professions
- Related to the child or not
- Damaged individuals but convincing liars
Neglect
The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs that is likely to seriously impair the child’s health or development.
- Lack of adequate nourishment/shelter
- Poor hygiene
- Not receiving medical attention when necessary
- Inadequate/inappropriate clothing
- Exposure to any kind of danger
- No boundaries or limits in respect of action or behaviour

Physical abuse
When a child is deliberately harmed in a way that causes ill health. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning/scalding, poisoning, suffocating, etc.
Physical harm may also be caused by a carer who feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health in a child.

Physical abuse
- May include extreme, inappropriate physical chastisement
- Deliberate, malicious injuries
- Inappropriate restraint

Possible signs of physical abuse:
- Unexplained injuries (especially if recurring) – bruising, bleeding, bite marks, fractures, burns
- Different explanations for injuries given to different people
- Repeated absences from school
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Child acting in a very physical way to others

Emotional abuse
The persistent emotional ill treatment that conveys to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or only valued as a means to meet the needs of another person.

All forms of abuse will include an emotional aspect.

Emotional abuse
- Persistent ridicule, rejection, humiliation
- Living in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation
- Being allowed no contact with other children
- Inappropriate expectations being imposed
- Low warmth, high criticism
- Being bullied, scape-goated
Sexual abuse
Sexual abuse is the actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child under 18 by any person. This would involve any form of sexual activity to which the child cannot give true consent either by law or because of ignorance, dependence, developmental maturity or fear.

What may constitute sexual abuse:
- Exposure to pornographic materials
- Being involved in the sexual activities of adults
- Being touched or talked to in sexually explicit ways – directly or indirectly
- Being spoken to about sex in ways which are inappropriate for the child and which seek to gratify the needs of others.

Indications of possible abuse:
- Marks (bruises, cuts, burns)
- Changed eating habits
- "Fearful, changed, unusual, difficult, withdrawn" behaviour
- Poor hygiene
- Inappropriate touching

Further indications of possible sexual abuse:
- Developmental delay
- Self injury
- Relationship changes
- Tiredness
- Overly mature knowledge of sexual matters

Domestic violence
- 33-78% of children have witnessed or become aware of domestic violence
- Witnessing domestic violence is very likely to have a detrimental impact on children causing emotional or psychological abuse
- Children are more likely to be at risk of physical/sexual/emotional abuse from perpetrators of domestic violence.

Guidelines for handing child protection concerns
If you are ever concerned about a child’s welfare or safety, OR if you feel a child may have been abused or at risk of abuse at home or elsewhere …..

YOU MUST DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT
Don’t assume someone else will take action
Guidelines for handling child protection concerns

If you have concerns:
- See the Designated Person for Child Protection (if unavailable see another member of SLT)
- Keep a record of your concern, sign and date it.
- If you are at all uncertain whether to “bother” someone – pass the information on!

Child Protection

What may raise our level of concern:
- Marks on the child’s body
- Changed behaviours
- Comments made by the child- disclosure or descriptive remarks

However there can be non-abusive reasons for these

How to deal with a disclosure

- **DO:**
  - Take the child seriously
  - Take your time
  - Let him/her speak
  - Reassure that is alright to tell you
  - Listen carefully
  - Ask open questions-clarify by open questions
  - Say what you will do next (i.e. report to DP)

- **DO NOT:**
  - Promise to keep it a secret
  - Stop the child from speaking
  - Ask leading questions
  - Question unnecessarily
  - Make assumptions
  - Minimise ("that doesn’t sound serious")
  - Try to deal with it on your own

...how to deal with a disclosure

- **DO:**
  - Record verbatim and sign and date
  - Provide factual information
  - Consider medical attention
  - Liaise with DP at the earliest opportunity who will refer to Social Care if appropriate

- **DO NOT:**
  - Delay in passing on your concern
  - Force the child to recall
  - Ask the child to show you any injuries requiring the removal of clothing
  - End the conversation abruptly
  - Criticise the alleged perpetrator
Next steps following disclosure

- Pass concern onto Designated Person ASAP
- Confidentiality – you should only discuss your concerns with appropriate others, it is not a matter for gossip
- Record keeping is essential – accurately record what is said and done

Key messages

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Any child might be abused
- Most abusers are known to the child
- Valuing and respecting children contributes to their safety
- Indicators are just that
- Reporting and recording systems are vital

Safer recruitment

For all staff schools check:
- Identity
- Qualifications
- References
- Police records (CRB)

Duties of Headteacher

- The policies and procedures of the governing body are implemented and followed by all staff
- Sufficient time and resources are allocated to the Designated Person
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about unsafe practice and that these will be addressed in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies.

..next steps

- There is a general requirement to inform parents prior to taking further action unless the allegation involves the parents.
- If significant harm is suspected it is legitimate to make a referral even if consent of parents is withheld
- Exceptionally an investigation may be undermined if consent is sought, eg. Where evidence may be destroyed.

...key messages

- Inter-agency co-operation is essential
- 90% of children are not abused
- Safeguarding is everybody’s business
- Most child abuse is preventable
Duties of the Designated Person

- To ensure all staff know the procedures to follow by:
  - Proper induction
  - Training at least every 3 year
- Supporting staff who might be affected by involvement in disclosure
- To undertake further training at least every 2 years
- To respond to every concern in line with agreed procedures

Abuse of Trust

- Sexual Offences Act 2003
  - Prohibits sexual relationship between students aged 16-18 (and past the legal age for consent) and adults in a position of trust

Allegations against staff

- HEIs have their individual procedures
- All allegations against staff (including trainees) have to be investigated
- If an incident happens, write your account at the earliest opportunity, giving names of witnesses, time, date and place
- Although teachers are allowed to use "reasonable" force it is better to avoid physical contact whenever possible

Further information

- www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection
- NSPCC

Allegations against staff

- It is important to note that if an allegation is upheld it could lead to a written warning or, in severe cases, dismissal.

Safeguarding

To do this we need to:

- Prevent unsuitable people working with children
- Promote safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe practice
- Identify where there are grounds for concern about a child’s welfare and initiate/take appropriate action

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Designated Person

- In this school the Designated Person is
- ........................................