

**SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**Standard 4 Safeguarding children**

**Standard 22 Handling allegations and suspicions of harm**

**SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**Introduction:**

This policy and procedure covers the main safeguarding responsibilities of the agency and also covers situations where allegations are made or suspicions are raised about an approved foster carer, employee or volunteer of the agency, indicating they have caused significant harm to a child. This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) procedures found at kscmp.org.uk or [www.medwayscp.org.uk](http://www.medwayscp.org.uk)

The specific standards and regulations that inform this policy are:

**Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011:**

* Reg. 11 - Independent fostering agencies - duty to secure welfare
* Reg. 12 - Arrangements for the protection of children
* Reg. 17 - Support, training and information for foster parents
* Reg. 30 - Case records relating to foster carers and others.
* Reg. 36 - Notifiable events

**The Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards 2011**

* Standard 4 Safeguarding children
* Standard 22 Handling allegations and suspicions of harm

Under the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 (section 11), the agency has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by identifying where there are child welfare concerns and taking action to address them, in partnership with other agencies where appropriate. The Children Act 1989 also introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children.

**Outcome**: The purpose of this policy and procedure is to inform employees and carers of the actions to take when there is a concern that a child placed with them has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm.

**Please note:** *The terms “child” and “children” used within this policy refer to anyone aged 0-18 years.*

# Following Whispers Statement of Intent:

Following Whispers is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children who are placed in our care, so that they can experience a healthy and fulfilling childhood that is safe, positive and free from harassment and bullying.

At Following Whispers, we recognise that we have both a moral and legal obligation to ensure a duty of care to all children in placement and this moral and legal obligation extends to our employees, carers and the communities within which we exist.

The “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018” guidance promotes that children are protected from harm and that everyone has a responsibility to commit to this. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a responsibility and a role to play in safeguarding children. The Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as the following:

* Protecting children from maltreatment
* Preventing impairment of children's health or development
* Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
* Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

At Following Whispers, standards of practice, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection are shared and communicated to all practitioners and carers working with the children and their families. To ensure that the promotion of safeguarding and child protection remains our core focus we are committed to:

* Offering 12 monthly training to all foster carers and practitioners
* A quality assurance programme that is monitored and evaluated by the management team and forms part of the foster panel role.
* A culture of equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure that everyone’s voice is heard and respected.
* Listening to and gathering children’s views, independent of their carers
* Transparent lines of communication and systems
* Safer recruitment process that is overseen by the registered manager and responsible individual
* Implementation of safe caring that is a set agenda for supervision with carers and supervising social workers (SSW) and is part of our training programme.
* Internet safety, children missing from care and sexual exploitation as a key focus within everyday practice, training, and forums, 12 monthly but more frequently if required.
* Following Whispers remaining current and up to date with new legislation, regulations, standards and national and local guidance.Working in partnership with placing local authorities to ensure that the agency is working in line with their protocols and procedures.
* Working in partnership with local safeguarding boards

Our Safeguarding policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with our policies relating to.

* Prevent and County Lines
* Complaints against foster carers
* Whistleblowing
* Missing from care
* Safe caring practice
* Anti-bullying
* Safer recruitment
* Behaviour management
* Health and safety
* Conflict of interest
* E-Safety

# Concerns about children / Definitions of abuse

A child is deemed to be “vulnerable” when the adults and environment in which they are living are unsafe and leave the child susceptible to some form of harm or abuse.

There are several types of abuse that are commonly employed by those wishing to harm children and the four main categories of abuse are:

* Physical
* Emotional
* Sexual
* Neglect

**Our commitment**

Children will remain at the heart of everything we do and by maintaining a child centred approach we ensure their welfare is given priority.

**Areas of Responsibility**

Following Whispers Fostering Manager is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to operationally and will ensure that all persons adhere to it.

Failure to follow the policy could compromise Following Whispers ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, raise questions about compliance with national and local safeguarding procedures and practice, endanger Following Whispers’ reputation and undermine the Agency commercially. Individual staff members failing to follow the policy could also find themselves subject to disciplinary procedures.

If there is an event or incident that would ordinarily fall within this policy, but a decision is made to take a different course of action, this must be discussed with the Fostering Manager. A written record must be created to explain the agreed action and the reasons for not following this policy, which must be retained in the carer’s file and child’s file on CHARMS. Dependent on the circumstances the Local authority and Responsible Authority must also be consulted.

**Children Act 1989 Section 47**

The Children Act 1989 describes the child protection duties on the Local Authority to act when they

*have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the authority shall make, or cause to be made, such enquiries as they consider necessary to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child’s welfare.*

These are known as Section 47 enquiries and if there is a sufficient safeguarding concern relating to a child or young person placed with the agency the following process will apply:

* There will be a Strategy meeting convened by the Local Authority which will be attended by the supervising Social worker and (if the concern is not about the foster carer the foster carer will attend), the child’s Social worker, someone from school, health and local police.
* The agency will provide a report for the strategy meetings.

The purpose of these meetings is to establish if the child is likely to suffer significant harm or will continue to suffer significant harm if the local authority does not intervene.

Please refer to *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* 2018 for more information.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Significant harm is more commonly recognised as “abuse”.

**Definitions and indicators of abuse**

There are four main areas of abuse – Physical, Emotional, Neglect and Sexual Harm.

The NSPCC describes signs and symptoms to look out for in the extract below:

***Physical abuse*** *happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing physical harm. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating. It’s also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. For example, they may give them medicine they don’t need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII)*.

**Spotting the signs of physical abuse**

Bruising

• bruises on babies who are not yet crawling or walking

• bruises on the cheeks, ears, palms, arms and feet

• bruises on the back, buttocks, tummy, hips and backs of legs

• multiple bruises in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs

• bruising which looks like it has been caused by fingers, a hand or an object, like

 a belt or shoe

• large oval-shaped bite marks.

Burns or scalds

• any burns which have a clear shape of an object, for example cigarette burns

• burns to the backs of hands, feet, legs, genitals or buttocks.

Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (such as bruising, fractures)

inflicted at different times.

If a child is frequently injured, and if the bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation doesn’t match the injury, this should be investigated. It’s also concerning if there is a delay in seeking medical help for a child who has been injured.

**Neglect** is not meeting a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs. This can result in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer not:

• providing adequate food, clothing or shelter

• supervising a child or keeping them safe from harm or danger (including leaving them with unsuitable

 carers)

• making sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care

• making sure the child receives a suitable education

• meeting the child’s basic emotional needs – this is known as emotional neglect.

Neglect is the most common type of child abuse. It often happens at the same time as

other types of abuse.

**Spotting the signs of neglect**

•children who appear hungry - they may not have lunch money or even try to steal food

• children who appear dirty or smelly

• children whose clothes are inadequate for the weather conditions

• children who are left alone or unsupervised for long periods or at a young age

• children who have untreated injuries, health or dental problems

• children with poor language, communication or social skills for their stage of

 development

• children who live in an unsuitable home environment

**Sexual abuse** is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn’t necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and non-contact abuse. Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child. It includes:

• sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or not

• rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus

• forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity

• making a child take their clothes off or touch someone else's genitals.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person and includes:

• encouraging or forcing a child to watch or hear sexual acts

• making a child masturbate while others watch

•not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others

• showing pornography to a child

• making, viewing or distributing child abuse images

• allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images.

• meeting a child following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them.

**Online sexual abuse includes:**

**•** persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, this is sometimes

 referred to as sexting.

• persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone

• having sexual conversations with a child by text or online.

Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.

Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection with a child in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse. This is known as grooming.

**Spotting the signs of sexual abuse**

There may be physical signs that a child has suffered sexual abuse.

These include:

• anal or vaginal soreness or itching

• bruising or bleeding near the genital area

• discomfort when walking or sitting down

• an unusual discharge

• sexually transmitted infections (STI)

• pregnancy.

Changes in the child’s mood or behaviour may also cause concern. They may want to avoid spending time with specific people. In particular, the child may show sexual behaviour that is inappropriate for their age.

For example:

• they could use sexual language or know things about sex that you wouldn't expect them to

• they might become sexually active or pregnant at a young age.

**Emotional abuse** involves:

• humiliating, putting down or regularly criticising a child

• shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names

• mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts

• constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault

• trying to control a child’s life and not recognising their individuality

• not allowing a child to have friends or develop socially

• pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations

• manipulating a child

• exposing a child to distressing events or interactions

• persistently ignoring a child

• being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child

• not being positive or encouraging to a child or praising their achievements and successes.

**Spotting the signs of emotional abuse**

There are not usually any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse, but you may spot changes in a child's actions or emotions.

Some children are naturally quiet and self-contained whilst others are more open and affectionate. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child or are particularly unusual for their stage of development.

Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused may:

* Fail to thrive

• be overly-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven’t known for very long

• not appear to have a close relationship with their parent, for example when being taken to or collected

 from nursery

• lack confidence or become wary or anxious

• be unable to play

• be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Older children may:

•use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn’t expect for their age

• struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts

• seem isolated from their parents

• lack social skills or have few, if any, friends

• fear making mistakes

• fear their parent being approached regarding their behaviour

• self-harm.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Trafficking, Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) relating to County Lines, Exposure to Domestic abuse, FGM - Female Genital Mutilation and bullying are all important factors which the agency and foster carers need to have a good understanding of from attendance at training, working with professionals and looking for key indicators of abuse described in greater detail in the links below:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-trafficking-and-modern-slavery>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-exploitation>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/fgm>

**How we reduce the risk of significant harm**

* We gather as much history on the child or young person from the local authority as possible
* We have a robust matching process which takes into consideration any actions we may need to do in order to help mitigate any fears that may stop the child or young person feeling unsafe
* We obtain regular feedback from our children and young people to gain their wishes and feelings
* We support children to recognise risks and develop the ability to protect themselves from harm or abuse
* We ensure staff working with foster carers and children are able to prioritise safeguarding for every child in our care
* We ensure all staff and foster carers have been subjected to our Safer Recruitment policy
* We provide regular supervision which discusses issues relating to risk and safeguarding
* We have an ongoing commitment to professional training to raise awareness of indicators of abuse
* We consult LADO and share local safeguarding information at support groups and in email communications. As an example this could include prevalence of County Lines in the local area
* We keep abreast of Serious Case Reviews particularly those relating to foster care or children in care and we share lessons learnt with staff and carers
* We ensure children and young people know how to raise a concern, worry or complaint by providing them with a Children’s Guide
* We complete risk assessments and safer care plans which are reviewed at least 6 monthly

**Reporting Suspicions or Concerns**

The following actions should be taken when there is any concern, disclosure, suspicion or allegation about the welfare of a child, which is causing or is likely to cause significant harm. This includes 'historical abuse' that may have occurred at some time in the past but which may not have been reported or investigated, or where there is no written outcome to the alleged historical abuse.

These procedures inform all employees, foster carers and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected child abuse, or a safeguarding concern i.e. a disclosure. These procedures apply to all those engaged with Following Whispers.

Employees or foster carers should firstly report their concerns to the Fostering Manager, their SSW or the designated on call person, if out of hours, unless any of these people are implicated, in which case one of the following must be notified:

* Responsible Individual
* The local authority children's social care services in whose area the foster home is located
* Police
* NSPCC
* Ofsted
* The placing authority for the child

## ***Remember the needs of the child should always come first. It is not for* individuals to judge!**

* Remember that the Data Protection Act 1998 is not a barrier to sharing information
* Be open and honest with children and others present about what information can be shared and in what circumstances
* Seek advice from the Fostering Manager or the designated on call person if you are in any doubt
* Consider safety and well-being and who may be affected by you sharing the information
* Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, and is only shared with people who need to have the information
* The information being given is accurate and up-to-date and is shared in a timely fashion, and is securely shared

**Safer caring**

Statutory framework

Regulation 12 (1) of the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 requires Fostering

Service Providers to prepare and implement a written policy which is intended to safeguard

children placed with foster carers from abuse or neglect.

The aim of the Safer Caring Policy is to provide guidance on expectations of behaviours and responses to these alongside house rules. Coram BAAF states that the purpose should be to ensure *‘… they are growing* *up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care*’ (Coram BAAF).

The Safer Caring Policy has to be reviewed as the circumstances of the household and the children in placement change. The risk assessment for each child or young person should be updated alongside the Safer Caring Policy.

**Maintaining up to date and accurate recordings**

The CHARMS system is the computer system for all foster carers and staff to complete their recordings. Recordings must be completed daily and within 24 hours. This is regularly checked by the supervising social worker and discussed in a timely manner and issues identified discussed during supervision with the carer. Regular reviews can help build up a pattern of increasing risk.

**E- safety**

Carers must ensure adequate parental control software is installed on the internet service provider, and any computers children have access to, along with up to date anti-virus software and recognised security software.

There needs to be monitoring of a child’s use of the internet, the degree of which should be agreed by the child/young person’s social worker.

Mobile phone usage must be agreed by the child’s social worker and there may be agreed monitoring of use and rules when and where it can be used.

Foster carers are prohibited from posting online via any social media sites images of the child in care.

**Reporting concerns or allegations**

For concerns or allegations relating to foster carers, or members of staff, see the ‘Managing Allegations against Staff and Foster Carers’ and Whistleblowing’ policies. These outline our responsibilities relating to safeguarding for those who are in positions of trust.

All concerns or allegations regarding a child or professional must be reported at the earliest opportunity to the Fostering Manager who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where the concern or allegation relates to historical abuse this will be shared immediately with the agency who will share this with the child’s social worker the next working day. Foster carers and staff must clearly record on CHARMS what was said, the context of this and agreed actions.

If a child needs urgent medical attention or protection, the foster carer must act immediately. This may include calling the emergency services and informing them that a child has experienced or is at risk of experiencing significant harm. The foster carer must inform the agency as soon as the child is considered no longer in need of immediate intervention. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide if a referral should be made to the local authority where the child or young person is placed as well as the child’s own local authority.

**How should I respond to a child or young person if they are making an allegation or telling me something concerning?**

**Advice to foster carers and staff members on what to do if a child discloses**.

Under no circumstances should information about the concerns or allegations be shared with anyone to whom the referral relates.

* Listen to what the child/young person has to say, but on no account question the child/young person. Reassure the child/young person that you have listened very carefully and understand what they say.
* Explain to the child/young person that you need to let your manager know what has happened and that they will then talk to their Local Authority Social Worker about it. Ask the child/young person if there is anyone they would like to talk to themselves.
* Write down in detail exactly what the child/young person has said using the child’s words as far as possible and record the time and date that you have received the information.
* Following Whispers employees should not make judgments on their own as to what constitutes a serious allegation or disclosure by a child or young person – **share the information as described above.**

**What if the concern or allegation is about a Foster Carer or staff member?**

There are specific procedures for dealing with allegations against Foster Carers and all staff and Foster Carers should be familiar with these. Report the concern or allegation to the Fostering Manager or the Director. If the allegation or concern is about the Fostering Manager, notify their manager. Clear allegations **must** be referred immediately to the area Local Authority and Local Authority designated officer (LADO). **No action should be taken until the matter has been referred and actions agreed with the area Local Authority and the local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).**

**Where can I find out about local processes and procedures?**

All Local Authority areas are covered by Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB), kscmp.org.uk or www.medwayscp.org.uk. They are responsible for coordinating the safeguarding processes in each Local Authority. They produce procedures, guidance and training for all agencies in their geographical area, advising how to respond to a wide variety of safeguarding issues including how to respond to concerns or allegations. **You need to know which LSCB covers your area and where to access their procedures.** These are often available online. If not, you should obtain a hard copy from the agency office.

**What about concerns or allegations involving children with disabilities?**

Children with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse than other children for a number of reasons. These include the increased likelihood of social isolation, their potential dependency on a number of carers for daily living and intimate care, and their communication needs, which may prevent them from telling someone they trust. The relationship between social care staff, parents and carers may also influence how situations are interpreted. Relationships are often collaborative and supportive and discourage the belief that abuse may be happening. A real knowledge and understanding of the child or young person will assist in interpreting unusual behaviour, the impact of their disability on their behaviour and the impact of any specific medical condition.

In spite of their increased vulnerability children with disabilities are underrepresented amongst the group of children with child protection plans. The Department for Education produced detailed practice guidance in 2009 called *‘Safeguarding disabled children, Practice guidance’* Safeguarding disabled children- publications -gov.uk which is essential reading for all staff working with disabled children.

**What about concerns or allegations where the alleged perpetrator is a child or young person?**

Occasionally allegations or concerns involve children or young people as the alleged perpetrator. In these circumstances the same referral process should be followed with the addition that the alleged perpetrator should also be the subject of an assessment by the Local Authority investigating the allegation. The alleged perpetrator should at the very least be viewed as a child in need, as they themselves may be a victim. A discussion of their needs should form a separate part of any strategy discussions. This should not however, take focus away from addressing the needs of the alleged victim, but rather should ensure that the needs of the alleged perpetrator are also addressed.

**Following Whispers Fostering Service Safeguarding Principles:**

• Following Whispers believes that all children/young people have a right to protection from exploitation, neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

 • The welfare of children/young people that Following Whispers has involvement with overrides all other considerations.

 • Following Whispers will take seriously and immediately report allegations or suspicions of abuse concerning children/young people. Detailed procedures about how staff must respond to specific concerns are available (see ‘Associated Procedures’) and must be followed when applicable.

• Following Whispers will work in partnership with local authorities and other agencies to enable children/young people to understand what abuse is and their right to be protected from harm (see the Safer Caring Policy). • Following Whispers will ascertain the wishes and feelings of children/young people in their care or with whom they work, inform them of their rights, help them put forward their views (using advocacy services if appropriate) and keep them fully informed.

• Following Whispers will positively promote the needs of children and young people and will consider their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, health, gender, sexuality and special needs.

 • Following Whispers will pay particular attention to the needs of disabled children who are statistically at an increased risk of abuse and neglect.

• Following Whispers will provide an effective complaints procedure for children and young people in foster care.

 • Each young person placed with Following Whispers will be provided with the Children’s Guide, which includes information about advocacy and support services.

• Following Whispers will work in partnership with the families of children and young people who have suffered abuse and keep them fully informed.

 • Following Whispers will ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored. • Following Whispers will provide high quality support and supervision to staff and Foster Carers to ensure that any safeguarding issues are identified and acted upon. • Following Whispers will offer appropriate support services to children who have suffered abuse.

• Following Whispers will use safe recruitment and assessment practices to prevent the employment/recruitment of unsuitable individuals.

• Following Whispers will provide Safeguarding Children training for all staff as part of their induction and continuous professional development. Foster Carers will also receive training about safeguarding children.

**Safeguarding in Parent and Child Placements**

Following Whispers has a specific procedure in relation to Parent and Child Placements. It is essential to remember that the welfare of the child in placement is paramount and that in the event of a risk to the child, including a risk from the child’s parent, immediate steps must be taken to protect the child.

Following Whispers practice is that a Parent & Child Risk Assessment should be completed and signed by the placing authority prior to placement for each parent placed in the household. The Risk Assessment should cover the care of the child or children, history or background, any known violent or threatening behaviour, contact, practical arrangements and the impact on other members of the fostering household. The Risk Assessment should be used for all parent and child assessed placements, parenting placements and pre-birth placements, even where the parent is below 18. The Risk Assessment is intended to safeguard children placed with Foster Carers and also other members of the fostering household. These are the measures that must be taken to safeguard any child before making a parent and child arrangement with a Foster Carer.

In the event of a safeguarding or child protection concern arising in relation to the child, the same process will be followed as with any child in placement. The Foster Carer will ensure the immediate safety of the child and report the incident immediately to the Following Whispers Supervising Social Worker. Following Whispers staff will respond immediately and report the matter to the responsible Area Local Authority and the child’s Social Worker. In the event of an allegation being made against the Foster Carer the process described within this document must be followed.

**Definitions and Abbreviations**

**Local authority designated officer (LADO)** - for allegations against people who work with children. Each local authority in England and Wales is required to have a LADO who must be consulted about allegations. LADOs are experienced children’s social work managers.

**Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)** – multi-agency strategic forum with responsibility for coordinating and monitoring how effectively agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**S47 Enquiry** – Safeguarding assessment (child protection investigation) under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 undertaken by local authority children’s services departments.

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** –

 • protecting children from maltreatment.

• preventing impairment of children's health or development.

• ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and

• taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

**Child protection** - Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Abuse** - A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g., via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Allegation** - may relate to a person who works with children who has:

• behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.

• possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or

• behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

**References**

Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015 Working together to safeguard children - Publications - GOV.UK

What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused, DfES 2006, (<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00182/>

Safeguarding disabled children, Practice guidance, DCSF July 2009. Safeguarding disabled children - Publications - GOV.UK

Protecting Children – Supporting Foster Carers, DCSF 2009. Protecting Children - Supporting Foster Carers: Dealing with an allegation: The Department for Education

Child Exploitation Online Protection – for information on e-safety, [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)

Think U Know website – for advice on e-safety for children, young people, carers and professionals, www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility, and we must all keep the child’s welfare at the heart of everything we do.