



**South Hams
District Council**

SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

**Version 2 – Approved by Executive in May 2009
and reviewed in August 2011**

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PART 1 – INTRODUCTION AND POLICY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Children and young people have a right to learn, have fun and be safe in the services provided for them and the activities they choose to participate in. As an organisation with responsibility for children and young people South Hams District Council has a moral and legal obligation to ensure their well being and protect them from abuse when they are engaged in services organised and provided or arranged by the Council.

All children and young people irrespective of their age, class, religion, culture, disability, gender, ethnicity or sexual preference have the right to protection from abuse.

All services are covered by this policy because all staff, members and volunteers have the potential to have contact with children and young people. This may be as direct contact (for example home visits by services such as Revenue and Benefits and site visits by Development Control and Environmental Health officers) or through customer liaison in Council buildings and the wider public realm (e.g. staff in the Harbour Office, or the Operations Teams) or through activities and events run by the council.

1.2 WHY HAVE A WRITTEN POLICY?

The purpose of this policy and its associated procedures is to help protect the children and young people who come into contact with the Council and protect South Hams District Council, its staff, elected members and volunteers.

A Child Protection Policy will assist in ensuring that children are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are:

- engaged in recreation related activity promoted by this Council or its contractors and agents.
- a participant in 'child care services' such as a school holiday club or Crèche provided by this Council or its contractors and agents
- in need of suitable temporary accommodation where households accepted as statutorily homeless, including families, pregnant women and 16/17 year olds.

All children have the right to live their lives to the fullest potential, to be protected, to have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy any activity, and to be treated with dignity and respect. Although hundreds and thousands of children have wonderful experiences, abuse does happen.

A commitment by this Council to a Child Protection Policy will provide consistency of child care standards across service functions. If the Council does not meet this commitment complaints will be investigated to improve our service. Details of the Council's complaints procedure are given at Appendix A.

Responsibilities

The overall responsibility for promoting and ensuring compliance with this policy rests with the Council. Elected Members and staff at every level have a responsibility to promote and implement the policy. The active co-operation of all managers and employees is essential for the policy to succeed.

The Council also has a responsibility to notify Social Services if households are considered intentionally homeless and there is no duty to provide long term temporary accommodation.

Definitions

- The term “child or young person” is used to refer to anyone under the age of 18 years. While this policy is focused on protecting children and young people, much of the advice is also applicable to vulnerable adults.
- The term “parent” is used as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians of children, whether temporary or permanent.
- The term “staff, elected members and volunteers” is used to refer to employees of the Council or its contractors or agents, district councillors, volunteers and anyone else working on behalf of and/or representing the Council.

1.3 POLICY STATEMENT

South Hams District Council is committed to –

- improving children’s wellbeing, and
- protecting such young people placed in our care from harm, abuse or exploitation

The Council recognises that it has a responsibility to ensure the wellbeing of children and young people as detailed in the Children Act 2004 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

Our aim is to create an environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else.

The Council intends to do this by:

- Raising the awareness of the duty of care responsibilities relating to children and young people throughout the Council, by defining and actively encouraging good practice amongst all staff, elected members and volunteers throughout the Council
- Promoting wider awareness wherever possible, i.e. partnership organisations and user groups.
- Ensuring that the Council’s contractors and agents are contractually committed to the same standards of good practice and behaviour
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people.

Objectives to achieve this are:

- Listening to children and young people, reducing dangers and working closely with other agencies.
- Training, supervising and supporting staff, elected members and volunteers who work with children and young people to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from abuse, and themselves against false allegations.
- Ensuring those who work with children and young people will be subject to the appropriate level Criminal Records Bureau disclosure and will not start work until the Council is satisfied with the outcome.
- Requiring staff, elected members and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Council's Child Protection Policy and Procedures, and enforcing them through appropriate action.
- Aiding staff, elected members and volunteers to respond sensitively and seriously to a child or young person who discloses information about abuse, and take appropriate action.
- Maintaining a level of good working practice at all times thereby reducing the risks to children and young people under the care of our staff and volunteers.
- Promoting the welfare and well being of children and young people using Council services.
- Having effective procedures for recording and responding to incidents and accidents.
- Having effective procedures for recording and responding to complaints of alleged or suspected child abuse.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately and implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.

1.5 SCOPE OF SOUTH HAMS CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

This policy seeks to provide a framework for child protection within the following activities;-

- a. **Out of School Child Childcare** i.e. Kids Club Network which provides full day care for young people aged school age, up to and including 12 year olds, during school holidays.
- b. **Crèche** – operated by South Hams District Council and partner organisations, for children aged 3months – 5 years inclusive.
- c. **Sports coached activities** run within a formal setting.
- d. **Sports coached activities -out-reach supervised** by a qualified coach employed by the Council in a building or on land not necessarily owned by the District Council.
- e. **Holiday Play Scheme activities out-reach** – supervised by a qualified tutor employed by the Council, but run in a building such as a village hall, not necessarily owned by the District Council.
- f. **Recreation activities** -_open access events and School Trips around Salcombe Harbour.

- g. **Statutory responsibilities.**-_wherever the Council, members, officers or volunteers work with children in relation to the council undertaking its responsibilities.

1.6 Review of the Policy

In addressing its obligations the Council will keep the Child Protection Policy under review. The Policy was originally issued in this format in 2006. This second version has been updated to reflect changes in guidance and practice, particularly in relation to developments in multi- agency working within Devon.

1.7 Corporate Child Protection Officer and Key Designated Officers for Child Protection

In order to properly address Child Protection matters the Council has identified the following staff as having specific roles in relation to child protection

Corporate Child Protection Officer (CCPO)		
Name	Post	Work Tel
Alan Robinson	Corporate Director	01803 861234

The Corporate Child Protection Officer (CPPO) has the main responsibility for managing child protection issues within SHDC. The role and responsibilities of the CCPO are to:

- Implement and promote SHDC's Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Act as the main contact within SHDC for the protection of children.
- Provide information and advice on the protection of children
- Support and raise awareness of the protection of children
- Keep abreast of all developments that impact on the protection of children including data protection, confidentiality and other legal issues.
- Encourage good practice and support of procedures to protect children
- Establish and maintain contact with local statutory agencies including the Police and Social Services
- Ensure the maintenance of confidential records of reported cases and action taken, and to liaise with statutory agencies ensuring their access to all necessary information.
- Organise monitoring and review of SHDC's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

The CCPO is supported by Key Designated Officers

Service	Key Designated Officer (KDO)	Post	Work Tel
Housing Services	Paul Eells	Housing Services Manager	01803 861234
Environmental Health	Ian Bollans	Head of Environmental Health & Housing	01803 861234
Natural Environment & Recreation	Ross Kennerley	Natural Environment & Recreation Manager	01803 861234

The role of the Key Designated Officers for child protection is to assist the CCPO and ensure that operational requirements are implemented in key Council services. The CPPO and Key Designated Officers for child protection are responsible for dealing with reports or concerns about the protection of children appropriately and have a responsibility across the Council.

PART 2 – PREVENTION OF ABUSE

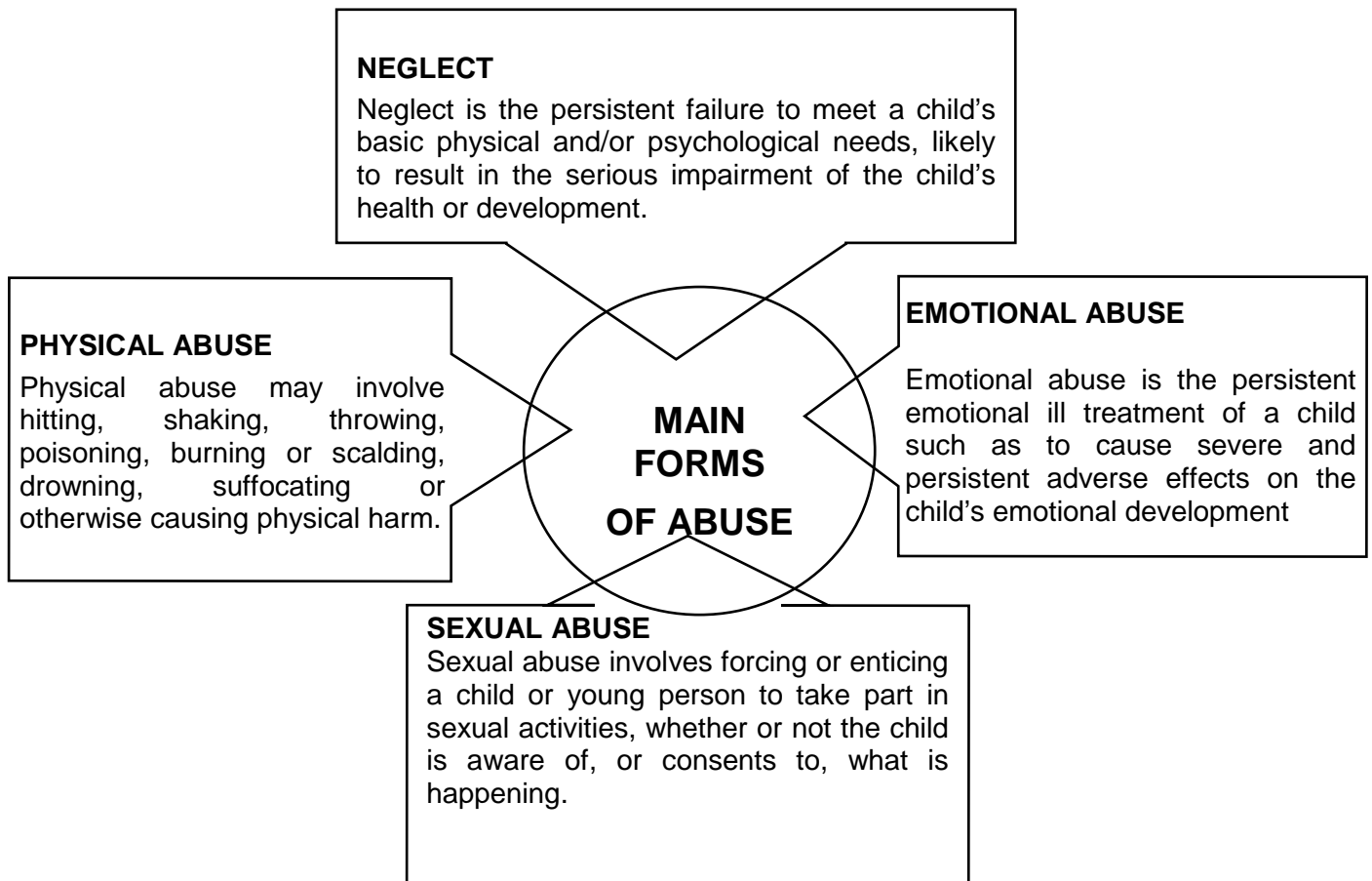
2.1 WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE

A person may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

The Main Forms of Abuse

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse.

As shown in the table below:



It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children or young people are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time.

Physical Abuse Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or young person.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child or young person whom they are looking after. The situation is commonly described as factitious illness, fabricated or induced illness in children or 'Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy' after the person who first identified this situation. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child or young person.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of a deliberate act, can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional Abuse. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child or young person's emotional development. It may involve making a child or young person feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or young people. It may also involve causing children or young people to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child or young person.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child or young person, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children or young people in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children or young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

Neglect. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child or young person's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, leaving a young child home alone or the failure to ensure that a child or young person gets appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or young person's basic emotional needs.

These definitions are based on those from *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (Department of Health, Home Office, Department of Education and Employment, 1999) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006* (HM Government).

2.2 RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE

Recognising child abuse is not easy, and it is not SHDC staff, elected members' or volunteers' responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child or young person is at risk. They do, however, have a responsibility to act if they have a concern.

Signs and Indicators

Every child and young person is unique and it is difficult to predict how their behaviour will change as a result of their experience of abuse. Listed below are some physical signs and behavioural indicators that may be commonly seen in children and young people who are abused, but remember they may only be an indication and not confirmation that abuse is taking place.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical Signs	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body➤ Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)➤ Cigarette burns➤ Bite marks➤ Broken bones➤ Scalds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Fear of parents being approached for an explanation➤ Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts➤ Flinching when approached or touched➤ Reluctance to get changed, for example wearing inappropriate clothing such as long sleeves in hot weather➤ Depression➤ Withdrawn behaviour➤ Running away from home

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Physical signs	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ A failure to thrive or grow➤ Sudden speech disorders➤ Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Neurotic behaviour, e.g. hair twisting, rocking➤ Being unable to play➤ Irrational fear of making mistakes➤ Self harm➤ Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour

SEXUAL ABUSE

Physical Signs	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas➤ Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas➤ Sexually transmitted disease➤ Vaginal discharge or infection➤ Stomach pains➤ Discomfort when walking or sitting down➤ Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn➤ Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people➤ Having nightmares➤ Running away from home➤ Sexual knowledge beyond their age or development age➤ Sexual drawings or language➤ Bedwetting➤ Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about➤ Self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts➤ Eating problems, e.g. overeating or anorexia

NEGLECT	
Physical Signs	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others ➤ Constantly / often dirty or 'smelly' ➤ Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight ➤ Inappropriate dress for the conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complaining of being tired all the time ➤ Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments ➤ Having few friends ➤ Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

The above lists are not exhaustive or definitive but are a guide.

Important Consideration

It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these signs and indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as death, or a new baby in the family, relationship problems between parents/carers, etc.

REMEMBER *There may be other reasons that a child or young person is exhibiting some of the signs and indicators but if you observe them you should seek advice on what to do next.*

2.3 RESPONDING TO CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS

These procedures inform all staff, elected members and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected child abuse, and they apply to all South Hams District Council staff, elected members and volunteers.

It is important that you are aware that if you have concerns about a case of possible abuse you are not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. **You do, however, have a duty of care to the child or young person to report suspicions you may have.**

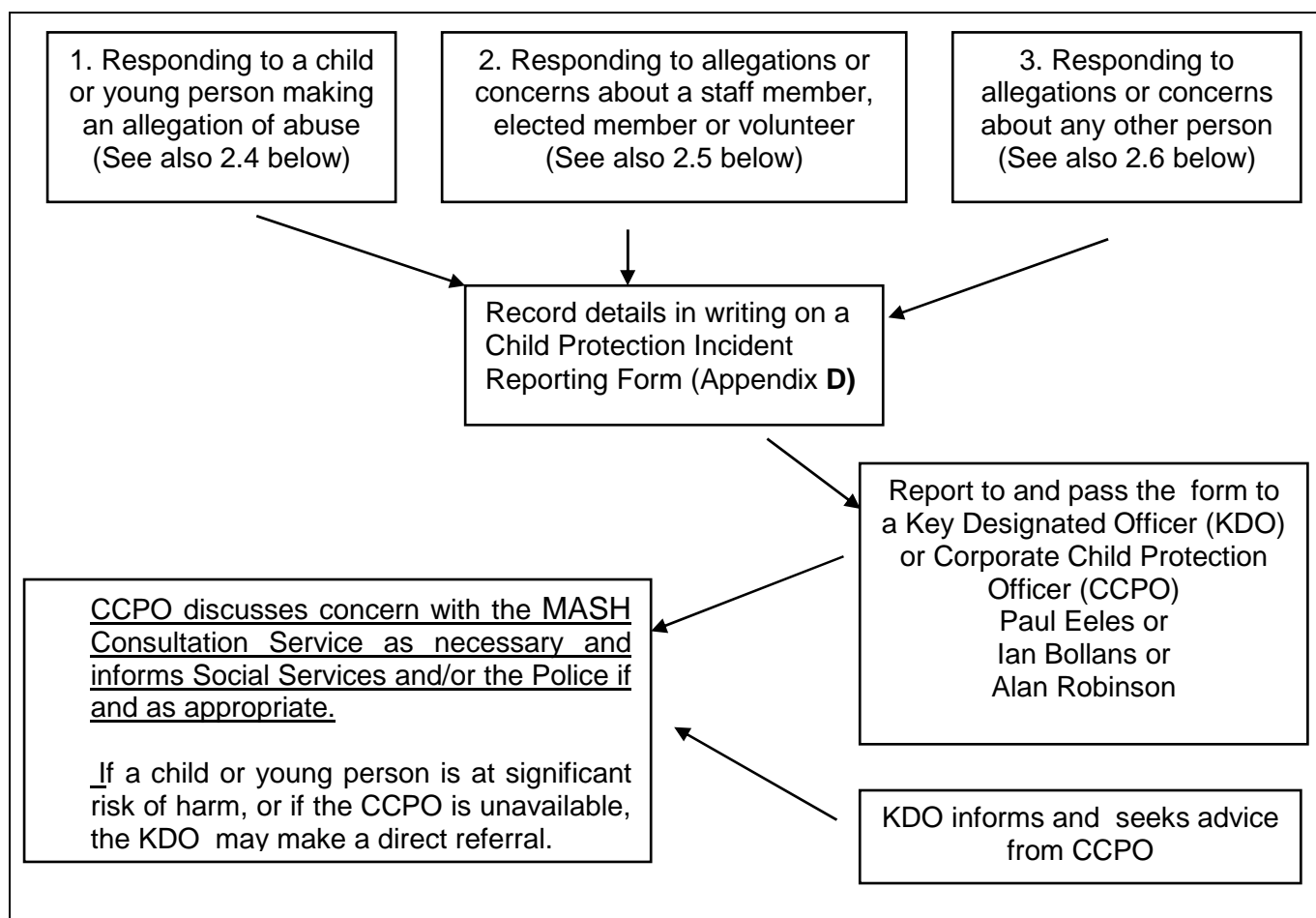
If you witness or observe a child in distress or showing signs of recent physical injury and you fear further abuse, you should contact the appropriate emergency service without delay using the 999 system.

Response Situations

In general there are 3 situations in which staff, elected members and volunteers may need to respond to a concern or case of alleged or suspected abuse. These are listed below and in the diagram:

1. Responding to a child or young person disclosing abuse, i.e. an allegation of abuse
2. Responding to allegation / concerns about a staff member, elected member or volunteer
3. Responding to allegations **or** concerns about any other person, e.g. parent, carer, other service user, employee of another organisation or partner organisation.

Full details of the procedures to be followed are set out in sections 2.4 – 2.6 below.



If staff members, elected members or volunteers have concerns about an incident involving a child that seems untoward or unusual they must report their concerns as soon as possible to the KDO or CCPO following the procedures set out below.

2.4 Responding to a child or young person making an allegation of abuse

Abused children and young people will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe. By listening and taking seriously what the child or young person is saying, you are already helping the situation. The following points are a guide to help you respond appropriately. It is important to listen carefully to the information a child discloses. When listening to a disclosure the following good practice is required:

- Observe any physical injuries, bleeding etc.
- React calmly so as not to frighten the child.
- Listen to the child. Do not show disbelief.
- Do not ask leading questions, as they can contaminate later evidence and discredit it.
- Tell the child that he/she is not to blame and that he/she was right to tell.
- Take what the child says seriously, recognising possible difficulties in interpreting what a child says, especially if they have a speech disability and/or language differences.

- Do not pre-suppose that the experience was experienced as bad or painful by the child at the time, it may have been neutral or even pleasurable. Always avoid projecting your own reactions onto the child
- If you need to clarify, keep questions to the absolute minimum and non-leading to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Do not introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children.
- Reassure the child.

Actions to Avoid when receiving a disclosure

- Avoid panic or showing shock or distaste, as they add to guilt and self-blame.
- Avoid probing for more information than is offered.
- Avoid speculating or making assumptions.
- Avoid negative comments about the person against whom the allegation is made.
- Avoid approaching the individual against whom the allegation has been made.
- Avoid making promises, agreeing to keep secrets, or guaranteeing confidentiality.

If possible, tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.

Recording a Disclosure

After the disclosure, record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (see Appendix D) all the details that you are aware of and what was said using the child or young person's own words, as soon as possible. In your record you should include:

- The date and time.
- The child's or young person's name, (and address and date of birth, if known)
- The nature of the allegation.
- A description of any visible injuries.
- Your observations – e.g. a description of the child's or young person's behaviour and physical and emotional state.
- Exactly what the child or young person said and what you said. Record the child's or young person's account of what has happened as closely as possible.
- Any action you took as a result of your concerns e.g. who you spoke to and resulting actions. Include names, addresses and telephone numbers.
- Sign and date what you have recorded.
- Store the information in accordance with relevant procedures, e.g. Data protection.

Report to and pass the form to a Key Designated Officer or the CPPO. In a case where your Key Designated Officer may be involved, inform the CPPO.

Key Designated Officer informs and seeks advice from Corporate Child Protection Officer.

CCPO discusses concern with the MASH Consultation Service as necessary and informs Social Services and/or the Police if and as appropriate.

If a child or young person is at significant risk of harm, or if the CCPO is unavailable, the KDO may make a direct referral.

REMEMBER *It is not your job to judge or investigate BUT to inform*

2.5 Responding to a suspicion or allegation of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct against someone who is a member of SHDC staff, elected member or volunteer

- Take the allegation or concern seriously; consider any allegation or concern to be potentially dangerous to the child or young person.
- Record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (see Appendix D) all the details that you are aware of as soon as possible, or at least on paper immediately.

Report to and inform your Key Designated Officer or the CPPO. In a case where your Key Designated Officer may be involved, inform the CPPO.

The Key Designated Officer will inform and seek advice from the CPPO,

CCPO discusses concern with the MASH Consultation Service as necessary and informs Social Services and/or the Police if and as appropriate.

If a child or young person is at significant risk of harm, or if the CCPO is unavailable, the KDO may make a direct referral.

REMEMBER *It is not your job to judge or investigate BUT to inform*

The CCPO must clarify the basic facts to establish whether there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that misconduct has occurred. If the basic facts support a suspicion or allegation of misconduct by a member of SHDC staff or a volunteer, the matter will also be dealt with in accordance with the SHDC's Disciplinary Procedure. If an elected member is involved the monitoring officer must be informed at once.

2.6 Responding to a suspicion or allegation of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct against someone who is not a member of SHDC i.e. parent/carer, service user, contractor's staff

Take the allegation or concern seriously

- Consider any allegation or concern to be potentially dangerous to the child or young person.
- Record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (see Appendix D) all the details that you are aware of as soon as possible or at least on paper immediately.

Report to and inform your Key Designated Officer or the CPPO

Key Designated Person informs and seeks advice from Corporate Child Protection Officer if appropriate.

CCPO discusses concern with the MASH Consultation Service as necessary and informs Social Services and/or the Police if and as appropriate.

If a child or young person is at significant risk of harm, or if the CCPO is unavailable, the KDO may make a direct referral.

In the case of contractor's staff, contact the contract supervising officer, who after consulting the CPPO, will need to draw the matter to the contract manager's attention to assess the implication for the contract. For confidentiality and child safety the CPPO must be consulted before this happens.

REMEMBER *It is not your job to judge or investigate BUT to inform*

2.7 Establishing Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only, i.e. Key Designated Officer, Corporate Child Protection Officers, Social Services or the Police.

It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child or young person, their family and any investigations that may follow. Informing the parents of a child or young person you may have concerns about needs to be done sensitively and in consultation with Social Services.

Any individual under supervision has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. This should be done in joint consultation with Social Services and the Police. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice the investigation.

Recorded information should be stored in a secure place with access limited to Key Designated Officers and The Corporate Child Protection Officer, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

If enquiries arise from the public (including parents) or any branch of the media, it is vital that all staff, elected members and volunteers are briefed so that they do not make any comments regarding the situation. They should be informed who the relevant designated Council spokesperson will be, and all enquiries directed through them. Staff, elected members, contractors and volunteers should reply 'no comment' to all questions / enquiries.

All allegations of abuse must be taken seriously. Although false allegations of abuse do occur, they are less than usual. If a child or vulnerable adult says or indicates that he/she is being abused or information is obtained which gives concern that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused, you must respond immediately.

2.8 Responding Out of Hours

Outside working hours if you become aware that a child or young person is at significant risk of harm you can make a direct referral as a private individual either to Social Services or the Police as appropriate (see contact numbers at Appendix B) . In this eventuality to protect your anonymity at the time of making the referral it is imperative that you make clear that you are making the referral as a private individual and that you wish to remain anonymous.

PART 3 – GOOD PRACTICE

3.1 Good Practice when dealing with Children

Good practice for staff, elected members and volunteers:

- Always be publicly open when working with children and young people, avoiding situations where you or a colleague and an individual child are alone unobserved.
- Do not leave children or young people that you are working with unattended.
- If any form of physical contact is required it should be provided openly and according to appropriate guidelines, i.e. National Governing Body of Sport Guidelines.
- If supervision in changing rooms or similar environments is required, ensure staff work in pairs and never enter opposite sex changing rooms.
- With mixed groups, supervision should be by a male and female member of staff, where possible, and treat everyone equally within the context of the activity.
- Ensure the wellbeing and safety of the child is placed above performance development.
- Feel confident to report concerns or worries about other staff members, elected members or volunteers to the appropriate person in authority, i.e. Key Designated Officer or Corporate Child Protection Officer.
- Line Managers and parents must be informed of all incidents and accidents at the earliest opportunity. This can be done by telephone, face to face or writing depending on the seriousness of the situation. The more serious the incident is, the more effort should be made for the message to be given by speaking face to face. This should only be done in consultation with the Key Designated Officer or Corporate Child Protection Officer
- If a child or young person is accidentally injured as the result of a staff member's, elected member's or volunteer's actions, seems distressed in any way, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report the incident as soon as possible to a colleague and make a written report.
- If a child or young person arrives at the activity or service showing any signs or symptoms that give you cause for concern you must act appropriately and follow the procedures outlined in Section 2.3 of this policy.

Report, record and inform if the following occur:

- If you accidentally hurt a child.
- If a child seems distressed in any manner.
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done.
- If a child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If a child needs to be restrained.

Inappropriate Practice

In the context of your role within SHDC, it is not good practice for staff, elected members and volunteers to:

- have 'favourites' - this could lead to resentment and jealousy by other children and could lead to false allegations.
- spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- when children are away from home, enter their rooms (unless in an emergency situation or in the interests of health and safety). If it is necessary to enter rooms, the door should remain open, if appropriate.
- take children to your home.
- do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary for officers, members or volunteers to have personal contact with children, particularly if they are very young or vulnerable. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the child and where possible their parents/guardians. It is important to respect their views. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible, particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child or vulnerable adult to carry out particular activities. Do not take on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Detailed guidance on transporting children is given at Appendix C.

In the context of your role within SHDC the following also apply:

- Never engage in sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Never engage in rough or physical contact except as permitted within the rules of the game or competition.
- Never form intimate emotional or physical relationships with children.
- Never allow or engage in touching a child in a sexually suggestive manner.
- Never allow children to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged.
- Never make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Never reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Never allow allegations by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Never share a room with a child for sleeping accommodation. NOTE: In special cases sharing may be required for health and safety reasons or if the child is very young or particularly vulnerable. If so, explain why this is necessary to the child and their parent or guardian and seek consent. If possible ensure two adults, preferably male and female, are in the room, if this is not too threatening for the child.
- Never invite or allow children to stay with you at your home.

The Care of Organisation

Anyone could have the potential to abuse children or young people in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken by South Hams District Council to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people.

Use of Contractors

South Hams District Council and its staff, elected members and volunteers will undertake reasonable care that contractors doing work on behalf of the Council are monitored appropriately.

Any contractor or sub-contractor, engaged by the Council in areas where workers are likely to come into contact with children, should have its own equivalent Child Protection Policy, or failing this, must comply with the terms of this policy.

Where there is potential for contact with children or young people it is the responsibility of the manager who is using the services of the contractor to check that all correct Criminal Records Bureau checks have been satisfactorily completed.

Holiday activities

A good practice parental consent form for Holiday Activities is given at Appendix F

3.2 Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers (where working or having contact with children is a requirement of the job)

It is important that all staff and volunteers working or having contact with children and young people, whether they are full time, part time, paid or unpaid, have the same recruitment and selection procedures applied to them and that we ascertain as much information as possible.

This policy links with and is supported by the following recruitment and selection related policies, which will be modified in line with guidance from the criminal records bureau and innovations in good practice as appropriate. Managers must follow these when recruiting:

1. South Hams District Council Recruitment and Selection Policy.
2. Employing People with Convictions: Guidance to Managers interviewing for posts requiring a Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Disclosure
3. **Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Disclosure Policy Statement**; for the secure storage, handling, use, retention & disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information

No staff requiring a CRB check will start work before the CRB check has been received.

Rechecks

As stated in the above policies, rechecks for those working with children or young people need to be carried out every three years, or in the case of 'seasonal' staff, also at the beginning of the season if their movements are not known since the end of the previous season.

Induction and Training

It is important that the recruitment and selection process is followed by relevant inductions and training in order to further protect children and young people from possible abuse. Appropriate training will enable individuals to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice and concerns or allegations of abuse. All staff and volunteers need to be aware of the procedures they need to follow in response to any concerns that they have. Staff working directly with children or young people, or more likely to encounter them during the course of their work (e.g. benefits assessors) need additional training. Possible relevant training courses include:

- Local Safeguarding Children's Board - Signposting courses at different levels
- Workforce Development Directory – Devon Children's Trust
- NSPCC – Educare Programme
- Sports Coach UK – Good Practice and Child Protection
- Department of Health – Fit and Safe
- First Aid, e.g. St Johns First Aid Qualification / HSE First Aid at Work
- How to work effectively with children and young people, e.g. Sports Coach UK.

Supervision

All staff and volunteers work more effectively when they are well informed, trained and supported. Line Managers should be sensitive to any concerns about abuse, act on them at an early stage and offer support to those who report.

It is the responsibility of Line Managers to monitor good practice. This can be done in a number of ways:

- Direct observation of the activity or service.
- Staff appraisals, mentoring and providing feedback on performance.
- Children and young people's feedback on the activities or services.

3.3 Photographing, Videoing and Filming of Children

There is evidence that some people have used sporting venues and activities as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children and vulnerable adults. The following procedures have been developed to protect children and vulnerable adults.

The following is required for SHDC activities or events where children or vulnerable adults are participating:

- Where appropriate, all materials promoting SHDC events or activities shall state that accredited photographers will be present.
- Where possible consent from the parent/guardian for photographing, videoing and/or filming of a child or vulnerable adult must be obtained prior to the event or activity.
- Where possible anyone wishing to use photographic/film/video equipment at a venue must obtain the approval of SHDC or their contractor
- An activity or event specific identification badge/sticker must be provided to and clearly displayed at all times by accredited photographers, film and video operators on the day of the activity or event.

- No unsupervised access or one-to-one sessions are to be permitted unless this has been approved in advance by the child or vulnerable adult, parent/guardian and the organisation, and appropriate vetting has occurred e.g. Disclosure check of individual wanting to photograph, film or video.
- SHDC reserves the right at all times to prohibit the use of photography, film or video at any event or activity with which it is associated.
- The requirements above are publicly promoted to ensure all people present at the event or activity understand the procedure and are aware of whom to contact if concerned.
- SHDC prohibits the use of mobile telephones and cameras in changing rooms.
- It is recommended that the names of children or young people should not be used in photographs or video footage, unless with the express permission of the child or young person's parent.
- Parents must be informed that photographs of their child or young person may be taken during Council services, activities or events, and parental consent forms need to be signed agreeing to this. This must include information about how and where these photographs will be used.

Concerns about Photographers, Video or Film Operators

Any concerns with photographers or video or film operators are to be reported to SHDC's Chief Child Protection Officer and where relevant, the Police.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS WHO FEEL UNHAPPY ABOUT OUR SERVICES FOR CHILDREN.

Over the years the Council has earned a reputation for providing good activities for children in the District.

However, mistakes can happen and when they do we will:

- Take them seriously
- Treat you with courtesy
- Investigate fully and promptly
- Provide you with a full explanation
- Put matters right as far as we can
- Respect your right to take your complaint further if you are not satisfied with the outcome

If you have a complaint regarding an activity for children

Stage 1

Contact the Head of Service responsible for the relevant activity or contract.

If you feel that your complaint has not been dealt with adequately then contact the Corporate Child Protection Officer or detail your complaint in a letter. Your complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days and you will be told how long you can expect to wait before receiving a reply.

Stage 2

If you remain dissatisfied with the written reply, write to the Chief Executive who will acknowledge your letter within 3 working days and will reply within 10 working days. Chief Executive – Richard Sheard, Follaton House, Plymouth Road, Totnes, Devon. TQ9 5NE

Complaining to the Local Government Ombudsman

The Local Government Ombudsman investigates cases where injustice may have resulted from maladministration on the part of the Council. The Local Government Ombudsman usually expects the complaint to have been investigated locally before intervening.

The Ombudsman who deals with South Hams District Council is at:

The Oaks
No 2, Westwood Way
Westwood Business Park
Coventry
CV4 8JB

Telephone: 02476 820046

Fax: 02476 820001

If you have an enquiry about the Local Government Ombudsman's service you can telephone their Advice line on 0845 6021983

USEFUL CONTACTS

- **Devon MASH Contact Details:**
 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (M.A.S.H)
 PO Box 723
 Exeter
 EX1 9QS
MASH Enquiries: Tel: 0345 155 1071
 E-mail: mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk Fax: 01392 448951

- **Devon and Cornwall Constabulary (Police)**
 Police Central Switchboard Tel: 08452 777444
 Police Emergency Tel: 999

- **NSPCC** Tel: 0808 800 5000
 Child Protection Help line
www.nspcc.org.uk

- **Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)** Tel: 0870 90 90 811
 PO Box 110, Liverpool, L3 6ZZ
<http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

- **South Hams District Council** Tel: 01803 861234
 Follaton House
 Plymouth Road
 Totnes
 Devon
 TQ9 5 NE

South Hams District Council can act as an umbrella body to process Criminal Records Bureau Checks for other Voluntary Organisations, i.e. community sports.

- **Devon County Council** Tel: 01392 383266
 (Records Disclosure Service)
 Devon County Council can act as an umbrella body to process Criminal Records Bureau Checks for other organisations, i.e. community organisations.
www.devon.gov.uk

- Devon County Council, Children and Families** Tel: 0845 1551013

- **Devon County Council, Schools and Education** Tel: 0845 1551019

PROCEDURE FOR TAKING AND TRANSPORTING CHILDREN OR AWAY FROM HOME

Outreach work involving the transportation of young people will need to be approved by the Head of Service.

If it is necessary to provide transport or take children or vulnerable adults away from home the following good practice must be followed:

- Where practicable request written parental/guardian consent if members of SHDC are required to transport children or vulnerable adults.
- Always tell another member of SHDC that you are transporting a child, give details of the route and the anticipated length of the journey.
- Ensure all vehicles are correctly insured. If the employees vehicle is not insured for business purposes, it must not be used.
- All reasonable safety measures are taken, e.g. children in the back seat, seatbelts are worn, and safety seats for small children. There should be an escort as well as the driver.
- Ensure, where possible a male and female accompany mixed groups of children or vulnerable adults. These adults should be familiar with and agree to abide by SHDC's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Always plan and prepare a detailed programme of activities and ensure copies are available for other members and parents/guardians.

CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

All information will be treated in strict confidence. Please complete as accurately and fully as you can in accordance with Council Procedures. If necessary continue on a separate sheet to ensure no detail is lost.

1. Details of the incident or when you became aware of the issue:

Date: _____ Time: _____ Venue: _____

2. Who Raised the Concern:

Myself / The Child / A third party (Name) _____

3. Details of Informant:

Name: _____ Contact No: _____

Address: _____

4. Details of Child:

Name: _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Contact Number: _____ Sex M/F _____

5. Details of Next of Kin:

Name: _____ Relationship to Child _____

Address (if different from Childs) _____

Postcode: _____ Contact No: _____

6. State the Nature of the Concern (include dates, times, nature of incident or concern-behavioural, physical including signs of physical injury, racial other)

7. Has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said and by whom?

8. Have the parent(s) been spoken to? If so, what was said and by whom?

9. If there is an alleged abuser? If so, give details?

Name _____ Address _____

_____ Contact No _____

10. Have they been approached? If so by whom and What was Said by both?:

11. Who else has been consulted? Give details:

Your name _____ Position _____

To Whom have you reported this matter _____

Their position _____ Date of reporting _____

This form should now be given to Key Designated Officer or Corporate Child Protection Officer by hand in a sealed envelope marked "Confidential URGENT: Child Protection Issue".



Legislation and Guidance

Legislation

- The Children Act 2004
Aims to ensure the welfare and development needs of children are met and that children are protected from harm
www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/20040031.htm
- Human Rights Act 1998
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga>
- The Data Protection Act 1984 and 1998
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga>
- **The Protection of Children Act 1999**
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4006939
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/43/contents>
- Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2000
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>
- Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)
<http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk/>
- Housing Act 1996 Part Seven
http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1996/ukpga_19960052_en_14

Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health) 1999
http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4007781&hk=BUYMa8
- Devon County Council Devon MASH
<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/childrenfamilies/childprotection/mash.htm>
- Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures (Area Child Protection Committee)
<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/childrenfamilies/child-protection.htm>

- Every Child Matters , Change for Children
<http://every-child-matters.co.uk/?cat=3>
- First Check – NSPCC
A step by step guide for organisations to safeguard children, implement a child protection policy, procedure and code of practice
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/trainingandconsultancy/consultancy/supportingproductsandresources/firstcheck_wda47873.html
- Devon Children and Young Persons Plan
<http://www.devon.gov.uk/cypplan2008.pdf>
- Other key reference links include:
'What To Do If You're Worried A Child is Being Abused'
<http://www.online-procedures.co.uk/swcpp>
<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/childrenfamilies/childprotection.htm>

**South Hams District Council
Holiday Activities
CONSENT FORM**

I consent to my son/daughter Date of Birth
Who is a pupil at.....Primary School taking part in the Holiday Activities
at..... on the following date
.....

I authorise the organisers to obtain emergency medical treatment should it become necessary. I understand the extent and limitations of the insurance cover provided. Details can be provided on request.

Does your son/daughter suffer from any physical/medical condition which could be affected by this activity? Or does he/she require any additional supervision due to short attention span, aggressive behaviour, attention deficit disorder or other condition?

YES/NO -

If YES please give details
.....
.....

Does your son/daughter normally carry any medication?

YES/NO

If YES please give details

Do they self-medicate or is it necessary for an adult to administer it, or to supervise? (e.g. insulin injections; adrenalin for anaphylactic shock)

To the best of your knowledge has your son/daughter been in contact with any contagious or infectious diseases or suffered from anything in the last four weeks, which could become contagious or infectious?

YES/NO

If YES, please give details
.....
.....

Does your son/daughter suffer from any allergies?

YES/NO

If YES, please give details

Has your son/daughter received a tetanus injection in the last 10 years:

YES/NO

Please outline any dietary requirements of your child.....
.....

I undertake to inform South Hams District Council as soon as possible of any change in medical circumstances between the date signed and the date of the Child Activity. I may be contacted by telephoning {please include STD code}.....

While the child is at the activity I may be contacted at..... and if I am not available please contact.....on.....

Home Work

Address

If I am not available, please contact

Tel no

Name, address and telephone number of family doctor.....

.....

.....

Signed..... Parent/Guardian

Date.....

Declaration

South Hams District Council is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of children and young people by protecting them, from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional harm.

Working as an employee or volunteer of South Hams District Council or as an elected member it is important that you have taken time to thoroughly read this Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

By being made aware of the policy it is our intention to ensure that all are proactive in providing a safe and secure environment for the children and young people in our care.

.....

Declaration:

I have read and understood South Hams District Council's Child Protection Policy and Procedures and I accept the principles therein.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ (Please print)

Position in Organisation: _____

This will be kept in your personnel file

Vulnerable Adults

The recognised abuses in this policy are also relevant to vulnerable adults and officers/members within the Council who are made aware of vulnerable adults suffering abuse emotionally, physically or financially, the same processes set out in the policy should apply and be reported to DCC.