



CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

PROCEDURE

This procedure stresses the need to keep the focus of any action on the safety, well being and welfare of the child as a possible victim of abuse. It is noted that:

- Staff / volunteers should not try and investigate whether or not a child has been abused. This responsibility lies with the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) and the Police. All child protection concerns will be passed onto the BSCP by one of the designated persons without delay;
- The staff member/ volunteer should inform a designated person about their concern and if the suspicion falls on the person to whom they normally report their concerns to, staff and volunteers should be aware of what to do. They need to report to another designate;
- The staff member or volunteer should write down what the child said or the details of any significant marks or behaviour which were observed, noting any names, dates and times. A note should also be made of any witness – did anyone else hear what the child said, see the marks or notice the behaviour? This should be done as soon as possible, while the details are still fresh. The notes must record exactly what the child said, not what the staff member or volunteer thinks was meant. The staff member or volunteer may want to record this as well, but must start with what the child said.

If a child makes a direct allegation

Staff and volunteers must not promise to keep allegations secret when an abusive or exploitive relationship exists.

The staff member or volunteer should let the child speak but should not question him/her. The basic rule is to ask only questions which are necessary to clarify whether the child is alleging that abuse has taken place. If, at any time, it becomes clear that there has been a misunderstanding and that the child is not alleging that abuse has taken place, you should re-assess the situation as it may not be appropriate to follow this procedure.

If the child is clearly alleging abuse, the BSCP and/or the Police will interview the child and any further questions must be left for them. This does not mean that one should tell the child to say nothing more until the authorities arrive. The child should be allowed to speak for as long as they want.

If a child's comments seem to suggest abuse

If the child seems to be suggesting abuse, but it is not clear, the staff member or volunteer should:



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- Quickly try to create a situation in which the child can talk freely;
- Let the child speak, and ask questions only if they are necessary to clarify whether or not the child is trying to say that they have been abused;
- Listen carefully, remembering that a young child may not have the vocabulary to explain clearly what it is that distressed them; and
- If it is clear that the child is alleging abuse avoid asking any further questions.

If a child makes a serious allegation about an adult or about an older child, additional enquiries should be made. The child should always be taken seriously, but this does not mean accepting everything that the child says as a fact.

If, as a result of what the child has said, you become suspicious about a particular person, they should not be questioned by the staff or volunteer.

If a bruise or mark, or the child's behaviour, causes suspicions

There are a number of things which may raise questions; a child may have bruises or other marks, or the child's behaviour is unusual. These observations could have several different explanations and staff or volunteers may be unsure whether they should be concerned or not, however they should document and report any concerns they have about a child.

If a staff member or a volunteer is concerned, they should try to be clear in their own mind exactly what it is that is disturbing them.

It may be appropriate to ask the child or the parent about a mark or about unusual behaviour. Suspicion may be aroused more by an evasive or unconvincing answer than by the mark or behaviour itself.

If a staff member or a volunteer is concerned, they should note the names of anyone else who saw the mark, behaviour etc. which caused the concern.

Co-operating with child protection

Child protection enquiries are carried out by the BSCP and the Police, usually acting together. The staff and volunteers of voluntary and independent agencies are expected to co-operate with enquiries and must liaise with a designate or deputy designate as soon as possible.

When there is a concern relating to a person in a position of trust

If an allegation is made about a member of staff or a volunteer, or for any other reason suspicion falls on a member of staff or a volunteer, the K.S.I.M.C of Birmingham will follow



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the advice of the BSCP until the enquiries are complete. The designated person shall:

- Immediately take the person aside and inform them that an allegation has been made against them;
- At this point the person will not be informed about the nature of the allegation;
- Remove the said person from any direct contact with children. It may be necessary to suspend the staff member or volunteer from involvement in any contact with children. This action is intended to safeguard the welfare of children and does not assume that the person is guilty. It is also important to recognise the person's need to support at this time and to help;
- Make the parent of the child aware immediately of the concerns. During this time all care will be taken to ensure confidentiality of all persons concerned;
- Contact the BSCP on 0121 303 1888 (<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/index.php/safeguarding-concerns/cass>). Out of hours contact on 0121 675 4806.
- Inform Ofsted, if applicable.

When suspicion falls on a staff member or volunteer there are three possible outcomes:

- It may be proved to the K.S.I.M.C of Birmingham's satisfaction that the person has abused one or more children. In this case the person concerned will be asked to leave immediately and further action under the terms of the Law may be taken by the Police;
- It may be proved to the K.S.I.M.C of Birmingham's satisfaction that the person is not guilty of abuse, no action will be taken;
- The enquiries may be inconclusive, leaving suspicion, but no proof about the person's behaviour. In the best interest of the Community, the person concerned would be asked to resign from their position, with immediate effect, and, if applicable, work their notice prior to any contract termination.

Bullying

K.S.M.I.C of Birmingham has procedures and a policy about bullying to protect the welfare and self-esteem of a child. Also incorporated into the daily routine are activities to encourage respect for other students as well as the safety of the children within K.S.I.M.C of Birmingham.



What to do if a child tells you about abuse	
Step 1	Listen attentively as the child tells you;
	Do not prompt the child or family for further details or ask any questions as this is considered contamination of evidence.
Step 2	Document immediately the child's exact word, the time and place the allegation was made and anyone else that was present. Sign and date.
Step 3	Do not judge , reassure the child they have done the right thing to tell e.g. "I am pleased that you have told me about this";
	Do not make any promises you cannot keep (particularly about telling others about the information or about what will happen next).
Step 4	Take action as per responding to child abuse and neglect;
	Talk to the designated person immediately , anyone has the right to notify against child abuse and neglect.