



Safeguarding Policy

Current 2009

Updated 2009

LANCASTER GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Whole-School Policy on Safeguarding and Child Protection

A. Named staff/personnel with specific responsibility for Child Protection

Academic Year	Designated Senior Person & 'Back-Up' or Deputy DSP	Nominated Governor
2008/2009	DSP: Gill Jackson Back up: Jackie Cahalin Back up: Fran Walker	

B. Training for Designated Staff in School (DSPs should refresh their training every 2 years)

Name of Staff Member / Governor	Date when last attended CP Training	Provided by Whom (e.g. LCC, Governor Services)
Lynn Aitken	16.3.09	LCC

C. Whole School Child Protection Training (all staff should receive induction and an update every 3 years)

Who attended (e.g. all teaching and welfare / support staff, Governors, volunteers)	Date	Training Delivered by

D. Review dates for this policy

Review Date	Changes made	By whom
March 2010		

E. Relevant documents

Important Sources of Further Information

- 'Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education DCFS (2007) – replaces former DCFS Guidance and makes clear roles and responsibilities of education professionals, establishments and organisations.
 - Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board 'Safeguarding Children Procedures' (2006) - make explicit what action should be taken at the point of referral to Children's Integrated Services (CIS, formerly Social Services) and thereafter¹
 - Working Together To Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HM Government, 2006);
 - Child Protection Information Pack (Lancashire LA Child Protection Service, 2004)
 - What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (Department of Health et al, 2003) – included in this Pack;
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WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY ON SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

1. PURPOSE OF A CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 1.1. This policy is intended to give clear direction to staff and others about expected procedures for dealing with child protection issues. It also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. The aim of this policy is to ensure that child protection concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which prioritise the needs of the child.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. At LGGS we are committed to delivering the highest standard of education and the highest possible standard of pastoral care and support to our pupils and students. This policy is designed to support those aims.
- 2.2. LGGS fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school.

There are three main elements to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

- (a) **Prevention:**
(e.g. positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to pupils).
 - (b) **Protection:**
(By following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns).
 - (c) **Support:**
(To pupils and school staff and to children who may have been abused).
- 2.3 This policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers in school

3. SCHOOL COMMITMENT

- 3.1. We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, peer support and clear lines of communication with trusted adults helps all children, and especially those at risk of or suffering abuse.

Our school will therefore:

- (a) Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. This will be done by fostering positive relationships between staff and pupils and students through a strong and robust pastoral support system, effective teaching methods and continuing to offer an individualised programmes which allow young people access to one to one support at their request.

- (b) Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty. We will continue to provide confidential drop in sessions with the school nurse and school counsellor and provide various access points into these services both in school and through email etc. Staff will be briefed on supporting children with emotional needs and the pastoral system will continue to be run and managed with the needs of individual students central to the systems in place within school.
- (c) Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe and / or communicate their fears or concerns about abuse. The Citizenship programme and special days will support the delivery of this material, and will be supported by assemblies etc throughout the school year.
- (d) Include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills. The Citizenship programme and special days will support the delivery of this material, and will be supported by assemblies etc throughout the school year.
- (e) Ensure that every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

4. FRAMEWORK

Education staff have a crucial role to play in helping identify welfare concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage: referring those concerns to the appropriate organisation, contributing to the assessment of a child's needs and where appropriate to ongoing action to meet those needs. They will also be well placed to give a view on the impact of treatment or intervention on the child's care or behaviour. (*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006*).

4.1 Child protection is the responsibility of *all* adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. *All* adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect children. There are, however, key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection procedures. The names of those carrying these responsibilities in school for the current year are listed on the cover sheet of this document.

5.2 The role of the Designated Senior Person (Child Protection) is to co-ordinate the school's response to issues surrounding safeguarding and child protection. This includes staff training and induction of new staff and trainees within school as well as being the person to whom staff report concerns. The DSP is the person responsible for making a decision to refer a specific child/children for further assessment through social services.

5.3 This task will always be carried out in conjunction with the Headteacher. Decisions about referring a child/children to outside agencies should preferably be made jointly with the DSP and the Headteacher, unless the Headteacher is unavailable and the DSP judges that delay in referral will be injurious to the child/children.

5.4. The named governor responsible for child protection is responsible for monitoring the child protection and safeguarding policies within school, and for ensuring that the policy is adhered to in the everyday running of the school. However governors of the school will not be given details relating to specific child protection situations as this information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis to protect the confidentiality of the child and her family.

5.5 The child protection and safeguarding team within the LA are available for advice for the Headteacher and DSP and named governor responsible for child protection

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in the document produced by Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board (2006) and Document A1 in the CP Information Pack - 'Handling Concerns About the Welfare or Safety of A Child in School.'

- As part of the induction of new staff the child protection procedures will be outlined
- All existing staff will be asked to attend a Safeguarding update a regular intervals
- Parents are informed about our safeguarding practice and policy through the handbooks issued annually and via the school website.

7. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

7.1. LGGS will ensure that the Head Teacher, the Designated Senior Person and the nominated governor for Child Protection attend training relevant to their role at intervals of not longer than 2 years. The Designated Senior Person will also attend Inter Agency Child Protection training within this timescale.

- all staff should receive induction and an update every three years on Child Protection. This will be delivered by the DSP.

- Staff will be informed about current safeguarding issues affecting individual girls through the usual communication channels in school, but strictly on a “need to know” basis
- LCC Employee Welfare and Counselling Service 01772 533863 – leaflet in folder at back of CP Information Pack support networks are available to staff if there are concerns or queries.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1. Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection.

- Training in safeguarding will inform every adult working in the school about the need for and basic principles regarding confidentiality? This will include:
 - Why must a teacher never guarantee confidentiality to a child?
 - What should they say to a child who asks the adult to keep a secret and how should the child be advised that the information may need to be shared with others? (e.g. see Appendix 2 of the attached Procedures template)
 - Who needs to be given information relating to a child about whom there are concerns?
 - Who should not be given this information?
 - Who should be contacted under the LSCB procedures?

8.2 Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. Any disclosure of personal information to others, [including Children’s Social Care Services], must always have regard to both common and statute law.

8.3 Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (*Data Protection Act 1998, European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8*). Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of a child dictate that the information should be shared. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case, and legal advice should be sought if in doubt.

See also Document A10(ii) in the Child Protection Information Pack

9. RECORDS AND MONITORING

9.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records, or parts thereof, should be shared with other agencies.

- records showing concern about the welfare or behaviour of a child are kept in the log books or in the child's file in the school office
- Staff need to be aware that these files are confidential within school and act as aide memoire to the relevant staff, and as such are not public records
- child protection concerns are recorded by the Headteacher/ Head of Year or DSP and kept in the safe in the school office
- These files are subject to strict gate keeping procedures and may only be viewed by authorised staff.
- Teacher held notes will become part of general school records only after a concern is felt to have been resolved, and then only after agreement from the Headteacher and DSP. These records should not be destroyed until after the child has left school and reached her 32nd birthday (ie 7 years after she becomes 25).
- The monitoring of concerns and the collation of material relating to these concerns is the responsibility of the DSP
- Heads of key stage and the Headteacher will be informed of any monitoring of concerns, and are expected to keep the DSP informed of any incidents or reports which may be relevant to a safeguarding enquiry
- Monitoring records indicate sufficient concern to warrant a referral when the DSP and the Headteacher consider that the child is at risk of significant harm and that the school has exhausted its capacity to support and protect the child
- If a child transfers to another school their child protection file must be sent to their new school after the DSP has ascertained who the DSP is in the new school.

See also Document A10(i) in the Child Protection Information Pack

10. CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

- If a Child Protection Conference is called the DSP must make every effort to ensure that the school is represented at the meeting
- Training and support is available to staff who attend conferences through the Safeguarding training offered through the school
- The DSP should be trained to produce relevant, concise and professional reports for Child Protection Conferences

11. SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

11.1 Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant and there may even be moves to consider suspension or exclusion from school.

It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

11.2 This school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- (a) The curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- (b) The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
- (c) The implementation of school behaviour management policies (required under the Code of Practice, 1993 Education Act);
- (d) A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting;
- (e) Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families, in-line with appropriate confidentiality parameters;
- (f) A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever possible and so long as it is in the child's best interests to do so;
- (g) The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

11.3 This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school.

These are

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs
- School Security
- Staff Codes of Conduct
- Safe recruiting Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Anti-bullying

- Special Education Needs
- Health and Safety
- E-safety
- Handling Allegations of Abuse Against Staff

11.4 We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

It must also be stressed that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be particularly vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

Go to www.lancashire.gov.uk/safeguardingchildrenboard/ and click on 'Domestic Violence'

12. SAFER SCHOOLS, SAFER STAFF

- Staff are advised to familiarise themselves with the school and LA guidelines about physical contact with pupils and students and the Intimate Care Policy
- Staff are given guidance in school about how to avoid situations where allegations may be made against them. Individuals have a duty to follow these guidelines
- At LGGS we feel that individual counselling of girls, specifically if related to sexual matters, is a largely inappropriate activity for teaching and support staff, unless this is pertinent to their role as prescribed in their job description. Any member of staff with concerns about a girl's sexual activities is advised to refer the issue to the DSP.

See Document A10 in the CP Information Pack

Go to:

www.Lancashire.gov.uk/safeguardingchildrenboard/, **Appendix Q: 'Working with Sexually Active Young People Under the Age of 18'**

There are implications in this policy for the way we work with parents at LGGS. Information related to a child protection / safeguarding concern should be shared with parents unless there is serious risk to the child be so doing. In which case the DSP should make an immediate Section 47 referral.

Opportunities to share perspectives and experiences with practitioners from other agencies should be welcomed provided the rights of the child and her family to confidentiality is not compromised. All information should be shared only for the direct and demonstrable benefit of the child. Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of a child dictate that the information should be shared. The law permits the disclosure of confidential

information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case, and legal advice should be sought if in doubt

The recruitment and selection of staff is subject to a rigorous protocol.

When candidates for any post in school come for interview they are asked to bring the originals of the following documents. This is in addition to original documents showing their qualifications which are also checked by the Headteacher.

For proof of ID	For proof of address
<p>All the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport or Photo Driving Licence* • Birth Certificate • Passport sized photograph • Proof of National Insurance Number (eg, NI card, letter from government department, benefit book, P45 or P60) <p>* if you do not hold a valid passport or photo driving licence, the following will be accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage certificate • Paper driving licence 	<p>One of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent utility bill (eg, Gas, Electric, etc) • Recent credit card/catalogue statement • Recent bank/mortgage statement • Recent insurance statement • Valid TV licence <p>Note: If you have an existing disclosure certificate issued by another organisation, please bring this with you.</p>

On appointment a List 99 check is made immediately, followed up by CRB enhanced disclosure. This is in accordance with, and fully compliant to, the Lancashire County Council guidelines.

Staff are made aware of the procedures for dealing with complaints against members of staff through our complaints procedure documents and our whistle blowing policy.

See also Documents A6(i) and (ii), A8 and A7(i) in the Child Protection Information Pack.

Also, go to : www.lancashire.gov.uk/safeguardingchildrenboard/, Chapter 6, pp.16-20, and Appendix R: 'Procedure for Managing Allegations Against People who work with Children²'

SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

1. What Should Staff/Volunteers Do If They Have Concerns About A Child or Young Person in School?

Education professionals who are concerned about a child's welfare or who believe that a child is or may be at risk of abuse should pass any information to the Designated Senior Person (**DSP**) in school; this should *a/ways* occur as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours (see Flowchart at Appendix 1):

The Designated Senior Person is: Gill Jackson

The Back Up Designated Senior Person is: Jackie Cahalin / Fran Walker

It is these senior colleagues who are responsible for taking action where the welfare or safety of children or young people is concerned. If staff are uncertain about whether their concerns are indeed 'child protection' then a discussion with their DSP/line manager will assist in determining the most appropriate next course of action³:

Staff should never:

- Do nothing/assume that another agency or professional will act or is acting.
- Attempt to resolve the matter themselves.

What should the DSP consider right at the outset?

- Am I dealing with 'risk' or 'need'? (By definition, a child at risk is also a child in need. However, what is the *priority / level and immediacy* of risk / need?)
- Can the level of need identified be met:
 - In or by the school or by accessing universal services/without referral to Children's Integrated Services (formerly Social Services) or other targeted services
 - By working with the child, parents and colleagues?
- What resources are available to me / the school and what are their limitations?
- Is the level of need such that a referral needs to be made to Children's Integrated Services which requests that an assessment of need be undertaken? (**Section 17 Child in Need referral**)
- Is the level and/or likelihood of risk such that a child protection referral needs to be made (i.e. a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm)? (**Section 47 Child Protection referral**)
- What information is available to me: Child, Parents, Family & Environment?
- What information is inaccessible and, potentially, how significant might this be?
- Who do I/don't I need to speak to now and what do they need to know?

³ Detailed information on possible signs and symptoms of abuse can be found in Document C1 of the CP Information Pack and / or www.lancashire.gov.uk/safeguardingchildrenboard/ Appendix H while the LSCB 'Procedures for the Management of Individual Cases' can be found at Chapter 4 – same address.

- Where can I access appropriate advice and/or support? (LA Education CP Officers 01772 532634/01772 531196)
- If I am not going to refer, then what action am I going to take? (e.g. time-limited monitoring plan, discussion with parents or other professionals, recording etc)

2. Feedback to Staff Who Report Concerns to the Designated Senior Person

Rules of confidentiality dictate that it may not always be possible or appropriate for the Designated Senior Person to feedback to staff who report concerns to them. Such information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only and the Designated Senior Person will decide which information needs to be shared, when and with whom. The primary purpose of confidentiality in this context is to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

3. Thresholds for Referral to Children's Integrated Services (CIS)

Where a Designated Senior Person or line manager considers that a referral to CIS may be required, there are two thresholds for (and their criteria) and types of referral that need to be carefully considered:

(i) Is this a Child In Need?

Under section 17 (s.17(10)) of the Children Act 1989, a child is in need if:

- (a) He is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain, a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority;
- (b) His health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services;
- (c) He is disabled.

(ii) Is this a Child Protection Matter?

Under section 47(1) of the Children Act 1989, a local authority has a duty to make enquiries where they are informed that a child who lives or is found in their area:

- (a) is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order;
- (b) is in Police Protection; or where they have
- (c) **reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.**

Therefore, it is the 'significant harm' threshold' that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a child protection referral under s.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

The Designated Senior Person will make judgements around 'significant harm', levels of 'need' and when to refer.

4. Making Referrals to CIS (Guidance for the Designated Senior Person)

(i) Child In Need/Section 17 Referrals

The DSP should complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and email this to csc.acscustomerservices@lancashire.gov.uk.

- This is a request for assessment/support/services and, as such, you **must obtain the consent** of the parent(s) (and child/young person where appropriate), this should be identified on the CAF
- Where a parent/child/young person refuses to consent, you should make clear your ongoing plans and responsibilities in respect of support, monitoring etc, and the possibility of a child protection referral at some point in future if things deteriorate or do not improve. (This is not about threats or saying that this is inevitable but about openness and transparency in dealings with parents).

(ii) Child Protection/Section 47 Referral

Make a telephone call to The Hub 0845 0530009. You will speak to a Customer Care Officer (not a Social Worker) whose role is to receive your referral information, enter it onto the appropriate IT system and forward to the relevant Social Work Team Leader for consideration:

- You still need to complete a CAF and should forward this as soon as possible, and certainly within 48 hours. Email to csc.acscustomerservices@lancashire.gov.uk
- You **do not require the consent** of a parent or child/young person to make a child protection referral
- A parent should, **under most circumstances, be informed** by the referrer that a child protection referral is to be made. The criteria for not informing parents are:
 - (a) Because this would increase the risk of significant harm to a child(ren); or
 - (b) Because, in the referrer's professional opinion, to do so might impede an investigation that may need to be undertaken;
 - (c) Because there would be an undue delay caused by seeking consent which would not serve the child's best interests.

Fear of jeopardising a hard won relationship with parents because of a need to refer is **not** sufficient justification for not telling them that you need to refer. To the contrary, this lack of openness will do little to foster ongoing trust, particularly as the source of referrals will be disclosed to parents except in a limited number of circumstances. If you feel that your own or another adult's immediate safety would be placed at risk by informing parents then you should seek advice and/or make this clear on the MAARF and in any telephone contact with Children's Social Care .

5. CIS Responses to Referrals and Timescales

In response to a referral, Children's Integrated Services may decide to:

- Provide advice to the referrer and/or child/family;
- Refer on to another agency who can provide services;
- Convene a Strategy Meeting (within five working days);
- Provide support services under Section 17;
- Undertake an Initial Assessment (completed within seven working days);

- Convene an Initial Child Protection Conference (within 15 working days of a Strategy Meeting)
(see www.lancashire.gov.uk/safeguardingchildrenboard and go to Chapter 5 of the Safeguarding Children Procedures)
- Undertake a Core Assessment (completed within 35 working days);
- Accommodate the child under Section 20 (with parental consent);
- Make an application to court for an Order;
- Take no further action.

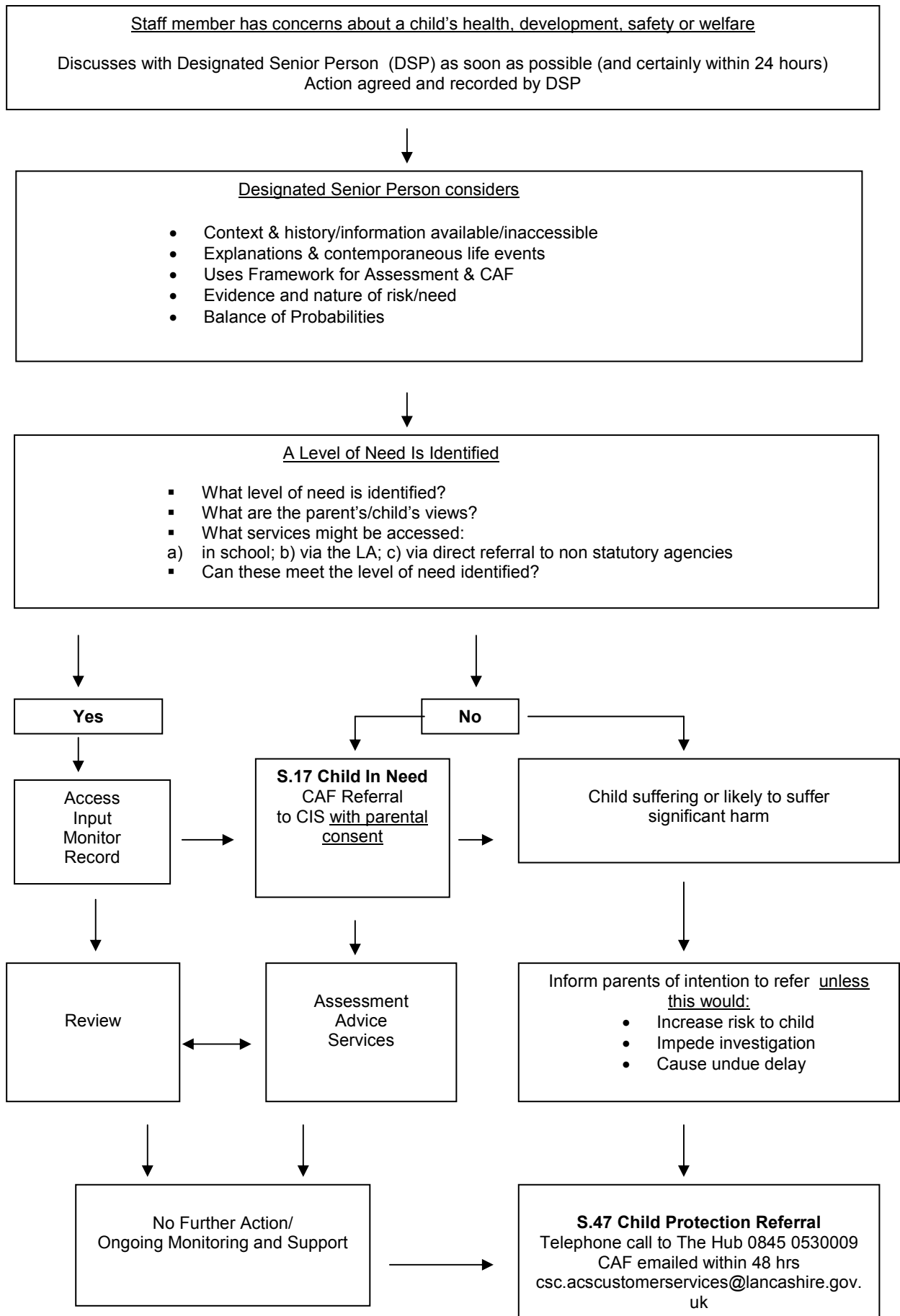
6. **Feedback from Children's Integrated Services**

CIS have 24 hours within which to make a decision about a course of action in response to a referral. A DSP should expect to receive written confirmation about action following any referral within 7 days. If you do not receive any (same day) verbal feedback following an urgent child protection referral, and where this places school / a child(ren) in a vulnerable position, you should ask to speak to a Duty Social Worker, the relevant Team Leader or the LA's Education Child Protection Officers (01772 531196 / 532634 / 532723)

7. **Risk Assessment 'Checklist'**

- Does/could the suspected harm meet the LSCB definitions of abuse?
- Are there cultural, linguistic or disability issues?
- I am wrongly attributing something to impairment?
- Does the chronology indicate any possible patterns which could/do impact upon the level of risk?
- Are any injuries or incidents acute, cumulative, episodic?
- Did any injuries result from spontaneous action, neglect, or intent?
- Explanations consistent with injuries/behaviour?
- Severity and duration of any harm?
- Effects upon the child's health/development?
- Immediate/longer term effects?
- Likelihood of recurrence?
- Child's reaction?
- Child's perception of the harm?
- Child's needs, wishes and feelings?
- Parent's/carer's attitudes/response to concerns?
- How willing are they to cooperate?
- What does the child mean to the family?
- What role does the child play?
- Possible effects of intervention?
- Protective factors and strengths of/for child (ie resilience/vulnerability)
- Familial strengths and weaknesses?
- Possibilities?
- Probabilities?
- When and how is the child at risk?
- How imminent is any likely risk?
- How grave are the possible consequences?
- How safe is this child?
- What are the risk assessment options?
- What are the risk management options?
- What is the interim plan?

APPENDIX 1: TAKING ACTION ON CHILD WELFARE/PROTECTION CONCERNS IN SCHOOL



The Designated Senior Person in School is: Gill Jackson... Tel: 206
The 'Back Up' DSP is Jackie Cahalin Tel: 203
or Fran Walker Tel: 227

APPENDIX 2: TALKING AND LISTENING TO CHILDREN

If a child wants to confide in you, you *SHOULD*

- Be accessible and receptive;
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace;
- Take what is said seriously;
- Reassure children that they are right to tell;
- Tell the child that you must pass this information on;
- Make sure that the child is ok ;
- Make a careful record of what was said (see *Recording*).

You should *NEVER*

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse;
- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children;
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc;
- Speculate or accuse anybody;
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information;
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved;
- Forget to record what you have been told;
- Fail to pass this information on to the correct person (the Designated Senior Person).

Children with communication difficulties, or who use alternative/augmentative communication systems

- While extra care may be needed to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are interpreted correctly, any suspicions should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children;
- opinion and interpretation will be crucial (be prepared to be asked about the basis for it and to possibly have its validity questioned if the matter goes to court).

The LA's Child Protection Information Pack (2004) provides guidance on these issues insofar as children with disabilities/complex needs are concerned – See Document C4.

Recordings should

- State who was present, time, date and place;
- Be written in ink and be signed by the recorder;
- Be passed to the DSP or Head Teacher immediately (certainly within 24 hours);
- Use the child's words wherever possible;
- Be factual/state exactly what was said;
- Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation.

What information do you need to obtain?

- Schools have **no investigative role** in child protection (Police and Children's Integrated Services will investigate possible abuse very thoroughly and in great detail, they will gather evidence and test hypotheses – leave this to them!);
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and pass on;
- Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of **who, what, where and when**;
- The question which you should be able to answer at the end of the listening process is **'might this be a child protection matter?'**;
- If the answer is yes, or if you're not sure, record and pass on immediately to the Designated Senior Person /Head Teacher/line manager.

If you do need to ask questions, what is and isn't OK?

- **Never** asked closed questions i.e. ones which children can answer yes or no to e.g. Did he touch you?
- **Never** make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc e.g. Top or bottom, front or back?
- If we must, use only **'minimal prompts'** such as 'go on ... tell me more about that ... tell me everything that you remember about that'
- Timescales are very important: **'When was the last time this happened?'** is an important question.

What else should we think about in relation to disclosure?

- Is there a place in school which is particularly suitable for listening to children e.g. not too isolated, easily supervised, quiet etc;
- We need to think carefully about our own body language – how we present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling us about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult and personal;
- Be prepared to answer the 'what happens next' question;
- We should never make face-value judgements or assumptions about individual children. For example, we 'know that [child.....] tells lies';
- Think about how you might react if a child DID approach you in school. We need to be prepared to offer a child in this position exactly what they need in terms of protection, reassurance, calmness and objectivity;
- Think about what support **you** could access if faced with this kind of situation in school.

APPENDIX 3: Children's Integrated Services Integrated Assessment and Support Teams

North West Lancashire

155 Greenbank Street
Preston
PR1 7JS
Tel: 01772 538700
Fax: 01772 201813

29 Station Road
Kirkham
PR4 2HB
Tel: 01772 685318
Fax: 01772 671018

Morecambe Bay

Unit 6 Northgate
White Lund Industrial Estate
Morecambe
LA3 3PA
Tel: 01524 512000
Fax: 01524 512001

Lancaster

Lancashire SSD
Initial Assessment Team
South Road
Lancaster
LA1 4XQ
Tel: 01524 66246
Fax: 01524 585562

South Lancashire

Brindle Road
Bamber Bridge
Preston
PR5 6UQ
Tel: 01772 904650
Fax: 01772 532504

The Hub

The Hub – email

Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours)

East Lancashire

Chaddesley House
Manchester Road
Burnley
BB11 1HW
Tel: 01282 425961
Fax: 01282 470142

2a Market Place
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