

**SECTION 3**

**MAKING A CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL**

- 3.1 In what Circumstances to Refer
- 3.2 Procedures to Follow when Making a Referral
- 3.3 Flowchart

## SECTION 3

### MAKING A CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL

#### 3.1 IN WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES TO REFER

It is particularly important that all those whose work either brings them into contact with children or contact with adults who have children, are alert to the definitions and indicators of child abuse. In circumstances where **you** have concerns that a child, including unborn children, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm to his or her health or development, or where a child gives information detailing abuse, the following principles must be adhered to:-

- a) all concerns and allegations, whatever their origin, must be taken seriously and considered with an open mind which does not pre-judge the situation;
- b) in circumstances where a child volunteers/discloses information about abuse, listen to the child. Ask sufficient questions to establish concern. **Do not interrogate him/her.**
- c) never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- d) The child should **not** be asked to repeat their story to a colleague or asked to write it down;
- e) in circumstances where a child has an injury but no explanation is volunteered, it is acceptable to enquire how the injury was sustained;
- f) if there are concerns about the explanation given for the cause of the injury, these must be referred to a Children's Team;
- g) always make a written record as soon as possible of any information volunteered to you. The record will include the time it was written, the setting, personnel present, as well as what was said;
- h) record all subsequent events up to the time of Children's Services/Police intervention;
- i) do not promise confidentiality;
- j) **ACT NOW – DO NOT DELAY.**

If you are unsure, contact your designated or named professional for advice about whether to make a child protection referral.

It is the responsibility of the individual professional who identifies concerns to ensure that the matter is referred to a Children's Team in the Safeguarding Business Unit of the People Group without delay. While professionals should, in general, seek to discuss any concerns with the family and where possible seek agreement to make referrals to

a Children's Team, **this should only be done where such discussions will not place a child at increased risk of significant harm or cause any significant delay.**

Whilst advice can be sought from a Named doctor or a Named nurse and a designated teacher within a school, this should not unduly delay the referral process. Concern need not be related to a single specific incident. It may also arise from the accumulation of minor concerns.

### **3.2 PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN MAKING A REFERRAL**

Make it clear you are making a Child Protection Referral and ask for the relevant local Children's Team.

There is not currently the facility to receive referrals by email, therefore all referrals should be made to the Safeguarding Business Unit of the People Group of the County Council on

**01926 410410.**

All the County Children's Team Offices are contactable through this one number.

Out of hours, the Emergency Duty Team should be contacted on

**01926 886922**

When you are making a referral regarding child protection concerns, it is important to have the following information wherever possible readily available for the duty social worker:

- name, date of birth, ethnic origin, gender of the child, address and telephone numbers;
- the reasons for your concern;
- injuries and/or other indicators observed;
- the child's first language;
- details of any specific needs of the child, e.g. disability, etc;
- details of family members, if known;
- other agencies, professionals involved;
- family doctor.

Staff in Children's Teams will make enquiries with other agencies who may have information regarding the child and family. On the basis of the information gathered, they will then make an initial assessment on what further action is necessary or appropriate.

Whenever Children's Teams receive information about a possible criminal offence against a child, they will share the information with the Police at the earliest opportunity and a decision will be made jointly on how to proceed with the enquiries.

Following the referral of a child, the referrer and the Children's Team must be clear about who will be taking what action.

Professionals who contact a Children's Team to make a referral must confirm the details of this in writing within 24 hours addressed to the Children's Team for that locality, using the WSCB Confirmation of Child Protection Referral form. (see Appendix 12. )

The team should acknowledge your written referral within one working day of receiving it, so if you have not heard within three working days, contact the Children's Team again.

## 3.3 FLOWCHART

## WARWICKSHIRE LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

