



## Referrals to Children's Social Services

DSL: **Darci Arthur**

Nominated Governor responsible for Child Protection: **Robin Curtis**

### Contact numbers

For urgent Child Protection/ Safeguarding advice:

**Social Services Central Duty Team : 03000411111**

**Central Duty Out of Hours Number: 03000419191**

**Kent Contact Centre: 03000414141**

**Text relay: 1800103000411111**

**Email address: [social.services@kent.gov.uk](mailto:social.services@kent.gov.uk)**

### What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding children and child protection [guidance and legislation](#) applies to all children up to the age of 18.



## What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is part of Safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

## The Referral Process

Children's Social Services are part of Kent's Social Services department. When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, the procedure in the Safeguarding /Child Protection Policy ([click here to access our policy](#)) is followed. Depending on the nature of the disclosure might mean that the school then contacts the Social Service team.

We thought it might be helpful to outline in a little more detail what happens in this situation and what the school's responsibilities are, as we understand that such referrals can be confusing or upsetting for families.

1. A member of staff may notice something about a child or a child may tell them something that causes them concern, but following good practice, the member of staff will not question the child in detail or talk to the family about the disclosure. They also will treat this matter with the appropriate level of confidentiality, fill in a record concern sheet and/or a body map and refer it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
2. The Safe Guarding Lead will then decide if the matter should be referred to our Area Safeguarding Advisor for advice and guidance. It is the school's duty to do so and following best practice advice, we will refer most disclosures as we are not in a position to judge their seriousness or importance but our role is to refer to the experts. This referral will be a phone call.
3. The school will then act on the advice given by the Area Safeguarding Advisor as to how to inform the family of the situation. In some instances, they will tell us they are not going to take further action in which case the school will inform the family of what has happened and the reaction from the Area Safeguarding Advisor. In some instances, we are told not to say anything to families, but to immediately refer the family to Social Services. It is not the responsibility of the school to discuss the referral in detail or to discuss what the likely outcome of the referral will be. In other situations, the referral will be discussed with the family as parental permission may need to be obtained.
4. Social Services will then follow up on any referral and contact the family as necessary.



We would like to stress that we appreciate that this process can be very upsetting for parents and carers and can make them feel vulnerable and anxious. In the past, it has also led some families to lose trust in the school which we would never want. Like you, our position is always acting to the best interest for your child and we have a duty both morally and in law to keep them safe and follow the correct protocols.

We would always aim to work in partnership with you to ensure that any issues raised by safe guarding referrals are resolved so that your child can continue to have a happy and successful education at Upton Junior School.

### **Mandatory Reporting of FGM - Procedural information**

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

If, as a school, we are concerned a child is being sexually exploited we will follow the procedures set out in this document and make reference to the [guidance provided by CHSCB](#). This further [Governmental guidance](#) can be useful when considering cases of CSE.

### **Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism**

We as a school will fulfil our responsibilities under the [Prevent duty](#), it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' wider safeguarding duties, and



is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences. If, as a school, are concerned we will follow the procedures set out in this document and make reference to the [guidance provided by CHSCB](#).

### **Online Safety (e-safety)**

Upton Junior School recognises the benefits and opportunities which new technologies offer to teaching and learning. We encourage the use of technology in order to enhance skills and promote achievement. However, the accessible and global nature of the internet and variety of technologies available mean that we are also aware of potential risks and challenges associated with such use. To find out more please read our Online Safety policy.

### **Procedure for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff/headteacher**

As outlined in our Safeguarding Policy we deal with allegations against staff in line with guidance from the DFE. Our procedures are designed to ensure that all staff, students and parents or carers are aware of the procedure for the investigation of allegations of abuse in order that all complaints are dealt with consistently, and as efficiently as possible.

### **Online Training CPD (CP/Safeguarding)**

All school-based staff will be offered an appropriate level of safeguarding training (to include internal school procedure and responsibilities; child protection process; how to recognise and respond to signs and symptoms of concern and abuse; safe working practice) and must undergo refresher training every three years. Training is organised by the DSL in line with government guidance.