

Appendix 3

Responding to Concerns that a child may be being abused or neglected

NOTE
EACH BOX IN THIS FLOW CHART HAS A CORRESPONDING SECTION IN THE PROCEDURES

Recognition of signs or indicators of abuse
or
An allegation / disclosure of abuse
If necessary take immediate steps to protect

Raising a concern
Staff or volunteer informs Designated Person in TreeHouse (Head Teacher) or Chief Executive if concern is not in the school

Initial Fact Finding

No further action - inform CEO and ensure full record made

Concern that child may have been harmed or at risk of harm by member of the public / stranger

Concern that child may be at risk of significant harm from a family member or carer
Designated Person or Chief Executive makes referral to children's services in local authority area child resides in and confirms in writing on the same day using local safeguarding referral form

Informing and updating CEO and chair of governors and chair of trustees as appropriate keep updated

School or children's services notify the police

With agreement of children's services, school inform parents / carers

Completing a CAF may lead to agencies responding to situation as a child in need rather than a child protection. This may mean the school then contributes to providing some additional support or is asked to work with other agencies to assist in this. The family of the child would be fully aware.

WHAT MIGHT THE LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN'S SERVICES DO AND HOW MAY AMBITIOUS ABOUT AUTISM/TREEHOUSE SCHOOL NEED TO BE INVOLVED

At any stage from the initial referral the children's services can decide to take no further action

If the school raised concerns or has significant / relevant information they may be asked to attend a strategy meeting.

- May request that the school completes a Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- May decide to carry out checks with other agencies to see if others have similar concerns or other worries.
- The first part of this inquiry can involve a strategy meeting which looks at what is known. At this stage the police may decide to carry out a criminal investigation and / or work with the children's services.

At any stage from the initial referral the children's services can decide to take legal steps to protect if it is assessed that the child will not be safe at home or with other relatives

The school may not have raised the initial concerns as this may have been done by another agency. If contacted by children's services in such circumstances and asked if there are any concerns it is vital that senior staff at the school ask staff who have direct contact with the child and then report back to children's services.

- May decide that concerns should now lead to an inquiry which should involve meetings with the family, seeing the child alone and making a range of checks. This is sometimes known as a Section 47 inquiry or Child Protection Investigation
- If from the inquiry children's services conclude that the child is or may be at continued risk of significant harm they will convene a child protection case conference.

If the school raised the initial concern they should be told the outcome ~ although this may not be the full details

The school should be invited to attend the conference and should also submit a report to the conference. All professionals attending a conference are asked if the child should have a child protection plan.
If a child does have a child protection plan the school must have a copy and know its role.

IMPORTANT

- If a child has a child protection plan the school should attend core groups and fully understand the risks and concerns.
- If a child is seen as in need the school should provide all reasonable support and additional services with other agencies.
- If there is a decision that there is no further action then the school should still raise any new concerns without delay.