



## **Child Protection Information for Staff**

### **Are you worried about a child in your care?**

All childminders, staff and volunteers running day nurseries, pre-school groups, crèches, out-of-school clubs and holiday schemes have an important part to play in helping parents care for their children. They can work with parents during times of stress offering support and respite.

Most children are subject to minor accidental injuries, but there may be occasions when you are concerned about the nature or frequency of injury. If you are concerned, you should raise the matter immediately with the designated member of staff for child protection liaison, Ruth Meaden. She will then discuss the concerns with the parents/carers of the child unless it is believed that such discussion would place the child at risk of significant harm.

Any concerns of this nature should be reported by the designated staff member for child protection liaison to the local social services office promptly where staff will advise them and can decide what action, if any, needs to be taken. This information may be part of a larger picture of abuse or neglect.

Remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect could lead to a criminal investigation so do not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, for example, ask a child leading questions or attempt to investigate the allegations of abuse.

Parents should be aware from your introductory leaflets, letters or posters that you are obliged to inform Social Services of any concern you may have that a child may be at risk or has been abused. The safety of children may include a duty to share confidential information with others involved in protecting children.

It is important that all staff understand something about child abuse and neglect, and are familiar with the procedures for reporting abuse. The Safeguarding Officer for Early Years & Childcare Service in Dorset can advise you about this, and will be able to tell you about local training opportunities. (Tel: 01305 221319 Louise Dodds)

### **A few danger signs to look out for and write down:**

Behaviour changes for no obvious reason.

Bruising in unusual places – arms, stomach, around the mouth, head and back.

Finger marks – each finger may mark or bruise the skin.

Bite marks

Child not using a leg or arm – it may have been broken by a blow

Inadequate clothing for the time of year.

Weight loss or an unexplained increase in appetite

However, the most important signs may not be those listed above, but things that you notice about a child that you know well, that make you feel concerned and uneasy. In such cases you should feel confident in the experience you have of working closely with children, and tell the designated staff member for child protection liaison who will then telephone the social services duty social worker.

Take action by telephoning or calling into your local Social Services Office at:

Ferndown Social Care  
Penny's Walk  
Ferndown  
BH22 9JY

Tel: 01202 877445 (Ferndown) E-Mail: [ferndownsocialcare@dorset.cc.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:ferndownsocialcare@dorset.cc.gcsx.gov.uk)

Out of Hours Tel: 01202 657279 (Bournemouth)

Support Service: 01305 228450 or 0845 0701007

Local Health Visitor: 01202 829101

Your designated staff member for child protection liaison should confirm your referral in writing within 48 hours and social services should acknowledge receipt within 1 working day, so if you have not heard within 3 working days you should contact social services again.