



# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

**Related Policies:**

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Lost Child Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy
- Staff Appointment Procedures
- Holding and Physical Restraint Policy

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2011

Date for Review: November 2013

## **General Statement of Policy**

In line with Section 157 of the Education Act (2002) and in adherence to the principles outlined in the DfES Circular 27/2004, the *Every Child Matters* reforms, Lord Laming's *The Protection of Children in England* report (2009) and Professor Munro's *A Child-Centred System* review (2011), Canterbury Steiner School fully embraces the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in our care.

Alongside the two appointed Child Protection Officers (CPOs) responsible for Kindergarten (Early Years), Lower and Upper School, every member of staff at Canterbury Steiner School is responsible for the physical and emotional well-being of its pupils.

The School will make sure that the CPOs attend specific training courses and then take responsibility for co-ordinating the School's responses to any incident where child abuse may be a possible issue. These persons will receive training every 2 years. All members of staff receive Child Protection training and refresher training every 3 years.

All members of staff are required to collaborate closely with the CPO. Any breakdown in this collaboration must be brought immediately to the attention of the College Chair.

All outside visitors to the School are required to check in at the Main House with the Receptionist and be given an identity badge to wear whilst on site. The Receptionist is responsible for vetting the visitor.

All staff appointments will not be confirmed, nor starting dates set, until satisfactory replies have been received from referees, proof of qualifications submitted by the employee, the required CRB Disclosures (with ISA Barred List checks) applied for, the medical questionnaire reviewed and documentation confirming the individual's right to work in the UK seen and copied.

This policy is not exhaustive. Staff members should contact the designated CPOs with any queries or concerns.

## **Policy Aims**

- To give a basic working definition of the 4 forms of child abuse and the possible signs to look for.
- To present the official School procedures and channels of communication in the event of a Child Protection incident.
- To raise awareness of individual responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To give guidance on recognising and dealing with suspected child abuse.
- To outline procedures when there are concerns involving members of staff.
- To outline the potential relationship between the School and external welfare agencies in the event of a Child Protection incident.

- To provide a framework for Child Protection which meets the requirements of Kindergarten, Lower and Upper School.

## **A) Responsibilities**

### **Child Protection Officer (CPO)**

There are two appointed CPOs for Kindergarten, Lower and Upper School. Their role is to:

- Co-ordinate action within the School and liaise with social care and other agencies where necessary in cases of abuse and suspected abuse.
- Act as a source of advice to the School.
- Ensure that staff are familiar with the School policy and procedure.
- Make child protection referrals and keep records accordingly.
- Liaise with agencies about individual cases.
- Organise and ensure delivery of training on child protection within the School.
- Provide appropriate feedback to members of staff as and when necessary.

CPO for Kindergarten up to Class 5: Mirna Pettengell  
CPO for Class 6 up to Class 11: Lucy Armitage

### **The Board**

The Administrator is responsible for ensuring that all members of the Board have had an Enhanced CRB check that will be up-dated every 5 years.

The Board will:

- Be responsible for undertaking regular reviews of the procedures that apply to child protection.
- Be responsible for receiving and discussing updates provided by the CPOs as part of the Child Protection report.

### **Staff**

All staff, and volunteers, have had an Enhanced CRB check that will be up-dated every 5 years.

School staff should:

- Be alert to the signs of abuse as given in this policy (see below).
- Report any concerns immediately, where possible to the CPO.
- Consult with the CPO if in any doubt about what to do.
- Follow the advice in this policy about how to handle pupil disclosures.

## **Partnerships with Parents**

It is important that the School has an established approach to working with parents. The priority is the welfare of the child, and effective liaison between School and parent is crucial when dealing with Child Protection issues and any suspicions of abuse.

The School recognises that different families from different cultural backgrounds will have different approaches to child rearing. These differences should be acknowledged by the School and respected, as long as they do not place the child at risk.

Whenever possible the School will work with and share information with parents. Permission for liaison and information sharing with outside agencies should be sought unless it places the child at risk. In these cases it is preferable to seek advice from KSCB (Kent Safeguarding Children Board) or make a child protection referral.

## **B) Definitions of Child Abuse**

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed by someone often in a position of power. It is not the responsibility of School staff to decide whether child abuse is occurring, but staff are required to act on any concerns and report it to the CPO. The welfare of the child is the most important thing.

### Physical

Where a parent or adult caring for a child physically hurts or injures a child. In addition to striking this can involve: shaking, squeezing, burning or biting. Supplying the child with poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs/alcohol. Attempting to drown or suffocate the child. It also includes the use of excessive force when carrying out tasks of caring, (feeding, clothing etc).

### Sexual

When adults seek sexual gratification by using children. This may be by having sexual intercourse, engaging with the child in fondling, masturbation or oral sex, and includes encouraging the child to watch explicit behaviour or pornographic material.

### Emotional

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Conveying to a child they are worthless and unloved. Inappropriate expectations placed on a child, serious bullying, exploitation or corruption of children.

Neglect

Where adults caring for the child fail to meet the basic essential needs of children like adequate food, clothes, warmth and medical care. Leaving young children alone and unsupervised. Refusing, or failing to give, adequate love and affection.

<b>Possible signs of Physical abuse</b>	<b>Possible signs of Sexual Abuse</b>	<b>Possible signs of Emotional Abuse</b>	<b>Possible signs of Neglect</b>
<p>Unexplained injuries or refusal to discuss them, cigarette burns, long bruises, slap marks / fingertip marks, teeth marks, history of bruises, injuries with inconsistent explanations, black eyes, self destruction tendencies, aggression towards others, untreated injuries, fear of medical treatment, unexplained patterns of absence that could be in order to hide injuries.</p>	<p>Depression, suicidal, self harming anorexic / bulimic, acting in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults / peers, unexplained pregnancies, running away, telling about a "friend with a problem of abuse," sexually abusing a younger child, sudden changes in school or work habits, fear of certain people, "chronic" medical problems, (stomach pains, head aches), withdrawn, excessively isolated.</p>	<p>Excessive fear of parent or carer, developmental delay, inappropriate emotional responses, self mutilation, extreme passivity or aggression, running away, drug/solvent abuse, excessive fear of situations and or people, social isolation, depression.</p>	<p>Non-compliance with specific medical care, inadequate or dirty clothing, child unsupervised, child dirty or smelly, poor child health surveillance, domestic violence, severe dental decay, not registered with GP or Dentist, frequent accidents or injuries to child, poor feeding or sleeping patterns, refusal to accept social services input.</p>

**School Procedure**

**C) Responding to Suspicions and Allegations of Abuse**

If a member of staff suspects a child has been, or is being physically, emotionally or sexually abused, or if they are approached by someone with similar concerns, they must immediately contact the designated lower school or upper school Child Protection Officer (CPO). In the absence of either of the School CPOs, they should approach the Administrator and / or the College Chair.

**General:**

Should a member of staff be approached by a child wishing to convey information, either about themselves or another child, which might give grounds for suspecting that child abuse is present, they:

1. Should attempt to remain supportive and receptive. Do not turn the child away.
2. Should not try to diagnose or reach conclusions on the information being offered or present personal reactions but should attempt to build up a detailed, precise and objective record of what is conveyed and the demeanour of the child.
3. Should not ask leading questions. Leading questions are questions which suggest an answer or contain the information the questioner is looking for. For example: "It was your father who hurt your arm, wasn't it?" or "You stayed at your auntie's last night, didn't you?" Instead, if the question is absolutely necessary, it should be non-leading: "What happened to your arm?" and "Where did you stay last night?"

The aim should be to maximise the amount of information given by the child without pressing for information.

**Specific:**

False allegations of abuse do occur. However, if a child says or indicates that he/she is being abused, or information is obtained which gives concern that a child is being abused, this should never be ignored.

**Action to be taken:**

A member of staff receiving information concerning disclosure should:

- react calmly so as not to frighten the child
- reassure the child he/she was right to tell. Do not turn them away
- not make promises of confidentiality, but let them know you will have to tell another adult what has been said
- keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. How? What? When? are suitable. Do not ask Why? Questions. You are looking for description not explanation.
- keep a record of everything that the child tells them

**Actions to be avoided:**

The person receiving the disclosure should not:

- panic
- ask leading questions - do not press for details
- ask why
- allow their shock or distaste to show
- probe for more information than is offered
- speculate or make assumptions
- make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- approach the alleged abuser

- make promises to agree to keep secrets.
- discuss the issue with anyone other than the CPO / College Chair / Administrator

### **Reporting to the School CPO**

- The disclosure from the child must be passed on to the CPO as soon as possible so a file can be opened. Any unnecessary delays must be avoided.
- It is vitally important that a full written record of what has been said, heard and / or seen is made as soon as possible using the Incident Report form.
- They should be as accurate as possible and stored securely in the Administration Office. This is particularly important if external agencies become involved later on.
- All records should be factual, with no assumptions or interpretations. The child's own language should be used to quote rather than attempting a translation.

The person making the referral should not discuss the matter with other colleagues, parents or pupils or any other person or agency within or outside the school. However, if it is felt appropriate by the CPO and the member of staff making the referral, the Child's parents/guardian should be informed as early as possible.

### **Recording, monitoring and informing**

Brief notes should be kept at the time of the disclosure and then written up with the subsequent completion of a critical incident sheet. Records may be used in legal proceedings and must be kept accurate and secure. All records must be passed onto the CPO and should only ever include factual information rather than assumption or interpretation. The closer it is to the original account given by the child the better.

### **The Child Protection Register**

It is School policy to maintain a Child Protection Register keeping a comprehensive record of all information relating to Child Protecting issues within the School. The CPO will inform all members of staff who have direct pastoral responsibility for children and young people of the names of those children who are on the child protection register. These children and young persons must be monitored very carefully and the smallest concern should be recorded on an incident sheet and passed immediately to the CPO (or College Chair in the CPO's absence).

### **Inter-agency liaison**

A group decision may be agreed between the CPO, the Class Teacher / Guardian, College Chair and the Administrator as to whether the information presented on the Incident Form relating to a particular child warrants approaching the KSCB (Kent Safeguarding Children Board) for initial advice. Further steps taken will depend on the advice of KSCB. Priority is given to ensuring the safety of the child/children who may be at risk. KSCB have great expertise in dealing with this type of issue in a sensitive, caring way. A central recurring theme in recent government reports on improving Child Protection is the need for co-operation and collaboration between protection agencies, which the KSCB seeks to provide.

For any meetings with KSCB, the School should be ready to give information on the child regarding:

- attendance and punctuality
- academic achievement
- child's behaviour and attitude
- relationships with peer group and social skills generally
- child's appearance and readiness for School life
- contact with parents/carers
- any specific incidents that need reporting.

### **Contact Details for KSCB**

If a parent wishes to contact the KSCB direct themselves, contact details for the Canterbury/East Kent area are as follows:

Elaine Coutts (Mon, Tue, Wed, Thurs)  
Area Children's Officer (Safeguarding)

Office: 01227 284682  
Mobile: 07786191601  
[Elaine.coutts@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Elaine.coutts@kent.gov.uk)

Jinder Kaur  
Area Children's Officer (Safeguarding)

Office: 01227 284684  
Mobile: 07545 423450

### **D) Concerns involving members of staff**

It is School policy that all staff must be approved through the CRB investigative procedure and must take responsibility for the presence of other adults who are brought into contact with children under the school's care.

Any concerns that involve allegations against a member of staff should be referred immediately to the College Chair and Administrator who will contact the Area Children's Officer (Child Protection) to discuss and agree further action to be taken,

if necessary, in respect of the child and the member of staff. In addition, the School's internal Disciplinary Procedures may be invoked. In dealing with any allegations against staff members, suspension should not be the default action but used only if there is no reasonable alternative.

The definitions given in this document must be considered alongside training as well as ongoing pedagogical discussions.

The school will demand that all staff attend relevant training. The Child Protection Officer will attend specific training courses and co-ordinate the school's responses to all information where "child in need" or "child protection" may be an issue.

The child's welfare is paramount. All members of staff are obliged to understand and accept this as an underlying principle during their course of work in relation to the children as well as when faced with the need to investigate and report "Child Protection" concerns and any actual abuse.

"Children in need" are those children whose health and/or development is significantly impaired, who need support to achieve and maintain reasonable standards of health and development, or are disabled.

Some children will always require extra help because of the disadvantages they face. The key is to ensure children receive appropriate attention at the first onset of problems and to prevent any children slipping through the net. We will ensure that our observations are objective and our reports are accurate and pertinent. In dealing with allegations, particularly any allegations against staff, the School aims to eradicate all unnecessary delays in reaching a resolution.

Any allegations found to be malicious will be removed from a staff member's personal records. Allegations which are not substantiated, are unfounded or malicious should not be referred to in employer references. If an allegation is found to be malicious, the pupil will be subject to the Pupil Discipline and Behaviour Policy and Procedure.

In the event of an allegation against a Child Protection Officer, the case should be referred to the other CPO by default. If both CPOs are implicated by allegations, the case should be referred to the College Chair.

## **D2) Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)**

It is a legal responsibility for the School to inform the ISA of any Child Protection issues, in which an employee of the School has been dismissed for harming a child or vulnerable adult.

## **E) Confidentiality**

Members of staff, other than the CPO and those involved closely, should only have enough details in order to help them to act sensitively and appropriately to a pupil. Sensitive information regarding pastoral issues and for children on the child

protection register will be kept separately in a folder in the closed section of the School office. Discretion should be used at all times when talking about the personal and changing circumstances of children, such as when a child goes into care.

Where children are on the Child Protection Register and leave Canterbury Steiner School for another, the designated teacher must inform the receiving school and the key worker. If the child leaves the school with no receiving school, details should be passed to the principal education social worker (ESW).

Education staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the investigative agencies. Members of staff should not promise confidentiality but should let the child know that only those who need to know will be informed and always for the child's own sake.

## **F) Physical Contact at School between Staff and Pupils**

Whilst staff should always be wary to keep any physical contact with pupils to a minimum, it is important to note that, on occasions, physical contact between staff and pupils is unavoidable (giving first aid, calming a smaller child down etc). There may also be situations where, under Section 9.3 of the Education and the Inspections Act 2006, a member of staff may use "reasonable force" to restrain an individual.

For full details, please read the Holding and Physical Restraint Policy and Procedure document.

## **G) E-Safety- Child Protection and the Internet**

The School does take special precautions to ensure adequate protection from emotional abuse and vulnerability on the web:

- Only Classes 9, 10 and 11 are offered access to the internet. However, it is School policy for parents/guardians to complete the Internet Parent Permission Form before pupils can use the internet at the School.
- It is the responsibility of the School I.T department to ensure all School computers, both staff and student, are properly firewalled and that the anti-virus software is fully operational and up to date.
- Access is blocked by the School firewall to social networking sites (MySpace, Facebook etc) and adult-content websites.
- The School will strive to remain as up to date as is reasonably practicable on new digital developments so as to anticipate the development of new online threats to child welfare and safety.

For full details, please refer to the School's E-Safety Policy.

## **Appendix I - Child Death Reviews and LSCBs**

In 2008, Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) took on an additional statutory responsibility to conduct child death reviews to raise awareness of local safety and welfare issues affecting children and to inform future child safety and welfare policy. In the extremely unlikely event of a child fatality at the School, the Child Protection Officer will pass on the appropriate information and evidence to Kent LSCB to aid their child death reviews.



## Child Protection Incident Report (Sample)

Aim to provide:

- A comprehensive record of the child's description of events of everything that has happened so far
- An account that does not give any personal interpretations, make premature assumptions or conclusions as to what is happening
- A description not an explanation

PUPIL NAME:

CLASS:

PERSON MAKING THE REFERRAL:



16.2.11

Action taken (sample):

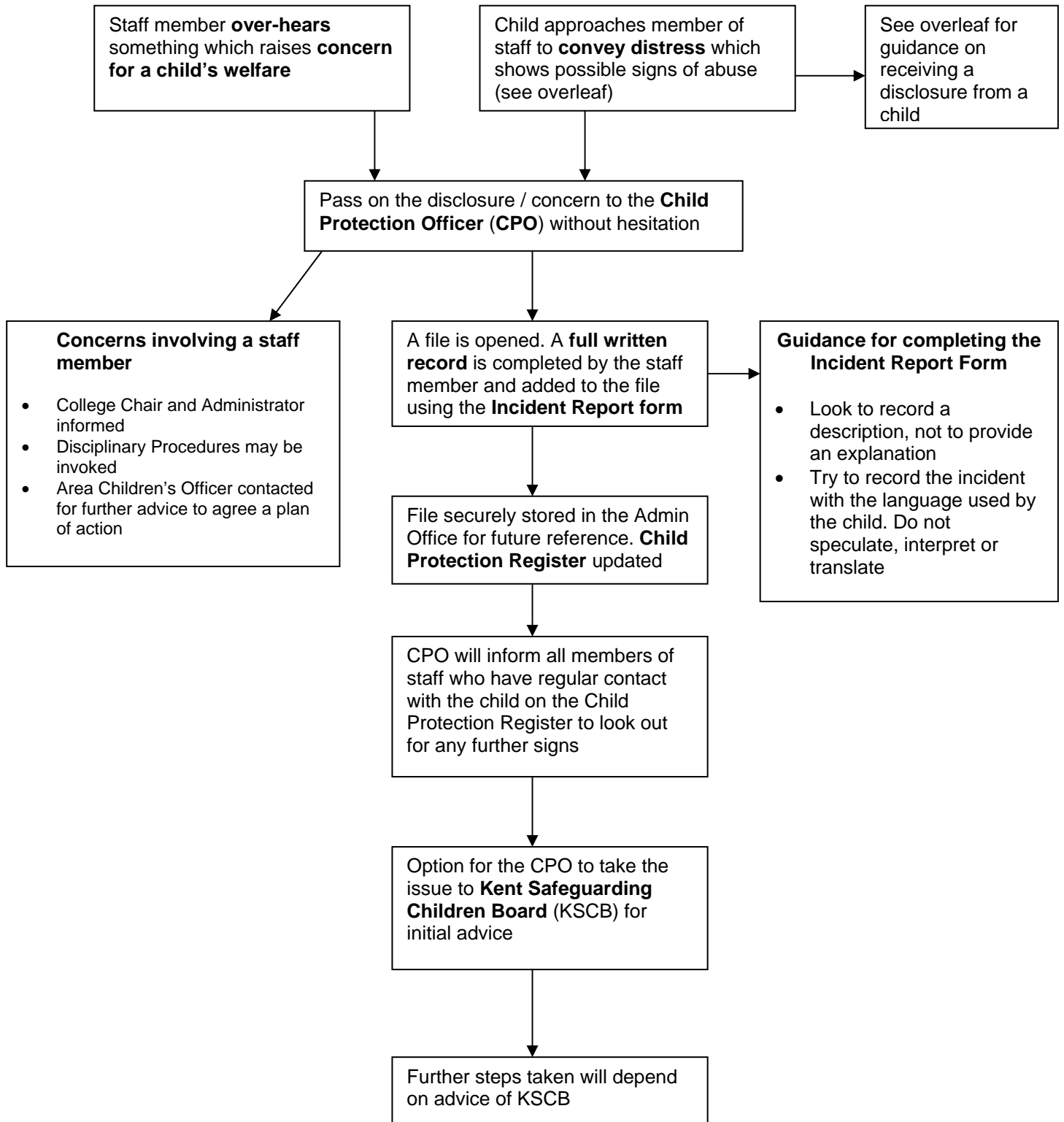
- 1) Contacted CPO?
- 2) What phone calls have been made?
- 3) Are the parents informed? What is their involvement/understanding?
- 4) What information has been passed onto staff? Who is informed and keeping an eye on the child?
- 5) Has the School contacted the KSCB?
- 6) Has there been a referral to Social Services?
- 7) Have any other contacts been made?

PUPIL NAME:

CLASS:

PERSON MAKING THE REFERRAL:

# Child Protection Procedures



Appendix 2

## Child Protection Information and Guidelines

<b>Possible signs of Physical abuse</b>	<b>Possible signs of Sexual Abuse</b>	<b>Possible signs of Emotional Abuse</b>	<b>Possible signs of Neglect</b>
<p>Unexplained injuries or refusal to discuss them, cigarette burns, long bruises, slap marks / fingertip marks, teeth marks, history of bruises, injuries with inconsistent explanations, black eyes, self destruction tendencies, aggression towards others, untreated injuries, fear of medical treatment, unexplained patterns of absence that could be in order to hide injuries.</p>	<p>Depression, suicidal, self harming anorexic / bulimic, acting in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults / peers, unexplained pregnancies, running away, telling about a "friend with a problem of abuse," sexually abusing a younger child, sudden changes in school or work habits, fear of certain people, "chronic" medical problems, (stomach pains, head aches), withdrawn, excessively isolated.</p>	<p>Excessive fear of parent or carer, developmental delay, inappropriate emotional responses, self mutilation, extreme passivity or aggression, running away, drug/solvent abuse, excessive fear of situations and or people, social isolation, depression.</p>	<p>Non-compliance with specific medical care, inadequate or dirty clothing, child unsupervised, child dirty or smelly, poor child health surveillance, domestic violence, severe dental decay, not registered with GP or Dentist, frequent accidents or injuries to child, poor feeding or sleeping patterns, refusal to accept social services input.</p>

- Golden Rules for Dealing with Disclosures**
- Do not turn the child away
  - Reassure the child they were right to tell and listen
  - Remain calm and supportive
  - Keep questions to a minimum
  - Don't ask why
  - Don't promise confidentiality to the child
  - Seek to maximize the information given without pressing for details
  - Clarify only if necessary
  - Make accurate notes using the child's own words and seek to record the child's demeanour
  - Seek support for yourself

- Actions to be Avoided**
- Do not approach the alleged abuser
  - Do not discuss the issue with anyone other than the CPO, College Chair or Administrator
  - Do not make negative comments about the alleged abuser

**The Key Point:**

**THE ROLE IN CHILD PROTECTION IS TO RECOGNISE AND REFER, NOT TO INVESTIGATE**