

Safeguarding policy

Coventry SEND IASS follow policies and guidelines outlined through the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership.



Sharing information

Coventry SEND IASS has the responsibility to share information with the local authority's (LA's) children's social care officers/ Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) when we have reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be suffering or may be at risk of significant harm.

While, in general, we should firstly discuss any concerns with the family and inform them of our discussion to make a referral to children's social care, the times when we should not do this would be when sharing information could:

- Place a child at increased risk of significant harm.
- Prejudice the prevention or detection of serious crime.
- Lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm.
- Put a SEND IASS employee/worker at immediate risk

Staff should always consult with the SEND IASS manager in the first instance.

The role of the manager as nominated safeguarding lead is to:

- Undergo training as needed to update and refresh knowledge in any changes in legislation and practice in safeguarding children, this will be in line with the Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership Board guidance.
- Be responsible for taking the decision to refer an allegation or concerns of the welfare of a child to the LA's children's social care or a concern about a member of staff to the LADO.
- Identify training needs.
- Make sure that any records made of any safeguarding incident allegation are kept up-to-date and secure
- Promote good practice.
- Make sure that safeguarding children is part of the risk assessment of each project.
- Report any shortfall in policy and practice to senior managers.

Listening to children & young people and parents – information for staff

Children and young people we work with will have a variety of ways to tell us that they are feeling sad or hurt. They may use a number of ways to communicate with us. This may be verbal, actions, signing, behaviours, and so on, so we need to be alert and attentive to each child/young person's method and ability to communicate these feelings to us. **Alternatively, concerns may be raised in discussion with parent/carer of a child/young person.**

If a child/young person does confide that they have been maltreated in some way we should take the following action:

- Comfort and reassure them that you are taking them seriously.
- Do not make any promises that you will keep this a secret – you have a duty to report this as detailed in this procedure.
- Seek only additional information from the child at this point that will help you clarify that the child has been hurt and the steps that may need to be taken to make sure the child will remain safe.
- Allow the child/young person to communicate freely about the incident if they so choose.
- Make factual notes as soon as possible of anything that has been communicated, diagrams of any bruising or marks and other information that you think is important.
- Do not attempt to investigate the matter yourself or ask leading questions.

As soon as you hear of an allegation/concern you must take the following actions:

- Question the person reporting the allegation so that you understand fully the details of the allegation.
- Take immediate action to make sure the child/young person is safe and remains safe.
- Inform the SEND IASS manager immediately of the concerns. Be prepared to discuss: - Details of allegations - Person/persons involved - Current risks. If the manager is not available, contact the deputy manager or the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH on 02476 788555).

The nominated safeguarding lead (SEND IASS manager)

Once the nominated safeguarding lead has received this information they can make one of the following decisions:

- The information provided indicates that there is no cause for concern so no further action is needed.

- There is cause for concern as it is likely the child/young person has suffered harm and the allegation is made against a parent or family carer.
- There is cause for concern as it is likely the child/young person has suffered harm and the allegation is made against a member of staff.
- There is cause for concern as it is likely the child has suffered harm but it is unclear who the allegation is made against.

On making this decision, the nominated safeguarding lead must take the following action.

Reporting to social care/LADO

It is helpful to have the following information:

- Full names, date of birth and gender of child
- Family address
- Identity of those with parental responsibility
- Names, dates of birth and gender of all household members
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents
- Any need for interpreter, signer or other communication aid
- Any special needs
- Any significant events, incidents or changes in the child's life
- Cause for concern to include details of allegation, the source, timings and location
- Child's current location, emotional and physical condition
- Our relationship with the child
- Our knowledge of the child and parent
- Information regarding parental knowledge of the referral

When contacting the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

- Provide information detailed above.
- Follow any instructions given by this representative.
- Make notes of all discussions detailing: - Name of person - Date of discussion - Time of discussion - Summary of key points - Action points

This should be recorded on Crossdata under the child/young person's name (Risk assessment tab)

In circumstances where SEND IASS are in direct contact with a child/young person, consideration should be given about returning the child or young person to the care

of any person of concern. If staff believe there continues to be a risk to the safety and welfare of the child/young person then you must inform the MASH team of your concerns.

SEND IASS does not have the legal right to stop a parent taking back responsibility of any child/young person in our temporary care as this is a decision for statutory agencies e.g. social workers, police, or the courts.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

SEND IASS also has a duty to protect vulnerable adults from abuse with whom we come into contact.

In this respect, we would follow the steps above, linking into the procedures for reporting set out through the Coventry Safeguarding Adults Board and reporting to Adult social care.