**Upholland Community Band Safeguarding Procedure**

Procedures

What to do if you have concerns about a child

You may have concerns about a child because of something you have seen or heard, or a child may choose to disclose something to you. If a child discloses information to you, you should:

* Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information and refer to Children’s Social Care Services.
* Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
* Accept what is said.
* Reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, don’t make promises you may not be able to keep *eg:* *‘Everything will be alright now’*, *‘You’ll never have to see that person again’*.
* Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, *‘You’re not to blame’*.
* Do not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
* Do not ask leading questions (*eg:* Did he touch your private parts?), ask open questions such as *‘Anything else to tell me?’*
* Do not ask the child to repeat the information for another member of staff.
* Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
* Take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards.
* Record the date, time, place any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase).
* Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Whatever the nature of your concerns, discuss them with the designated member of the committee. See the diagram on the next page for the process to follow.

If you still have concerns, you should refer to:

Lancashire Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) 0300 123 6720

## What information will you need when making a referral?

You will be asked to provide as much information as possible. Such as the child’s full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents. Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the call.

You should follow up the verbal referral in writing, within 48hrs

**Process Chart Where There Are Concerns
About A Child's Welfare**

Person has concerns about a child's welfare

Person discusses with manager

Still has concerns

No longer has concerns

Person refers to Initial Response Service and follows up in writing within 48hrs

No further child protection action, although may consider other agencies which could offer support

Social worker and manager decide on next course of action within one working day

## Allegations Involving a Volunteer

All volunteer members of the committee are checked to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people.

However, there may still be occasions when there is an allegation against a volunteer. Allegations against those who work with children cover a wide range of circumstances.

All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children or care for them must be taken seriously. All reports of allegations must be submitted within one working day to The Child Protection Officer.

The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

* Behaved in a way which has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children.

The allegations may relate to the person’s behaviour at work, at home or in another setting.

The Child Protection Officer will discuss the matter to determine what steps should be taken and where necessary obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded, whether a referral is required and/or whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

Some allegations will be so serious as to require immediate referral to Lancashire Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) 0300 123 6720 or the Police, but common sense and judgement must be applied in reaching a decision about what action to take.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, the Child Protection Officer will immediately refer the matter to the Lancashire Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership and ask for a Strategy Discussion/Meeting to be convened straight away.

Some allegations may be less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by the Lancashire Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation. Consequently, the Child Protection Officer should be informed of all allegations that come to the employer's attention and appear to come within the scope of this procedure so that he or she can consult Police and social care colleagues as appropriate.

Where such allegations are made, consideration must be given to the following three strands:

1. The police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
2. Enquiries and assessment by Children’s Social Care Services as to whether the child is need of protection or in need of services;
3. Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.