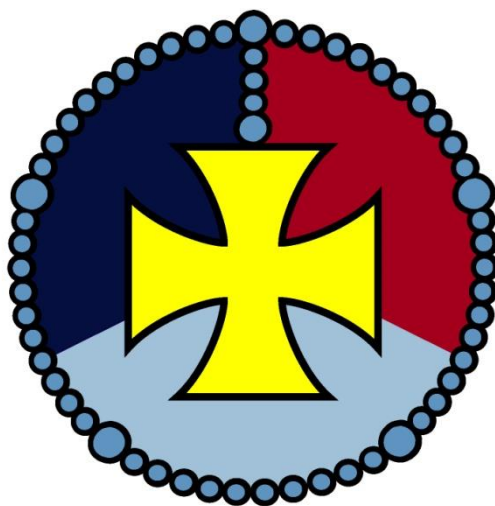


St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

What happens if the school is concerned about my child?

A Safeguarding Guide for



Parents & Carers



Every child matters in St. Bernadette's

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Contact Information

School

- Mrs Zamora (Designated safeguarding officer)
- Mrs Smith (Designated safeguarding officer)

MKSB

- Monday to Friday 08.30 to 17.00
- **Integrated Support and Social Care Referral Hub 01908 253169 or 01908 253170 out of hours**

Parent Plus

- 080 800 22 22
- www.parentlineplus.org.uk



Your child matters to us in St. Bernadette's

If a child tells an adult something that we think shows that they could be being harmed it is our responsibility to pass this information on to Social Care. We would endeavour to contact you before we contact the Duty Team. In Milton Keynes early help is available through the Children and Families Practices to ensure families get the support they need. Asking for help with your children is not a sign of weakness.

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Forms of Abuse

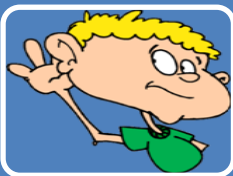
While this may be shocking to read unfortunately these are examples of what may be happening to our children.

Physical	Any intentional physical contact resulting in injury, pain or discomfort. It may include inflicting pain through beating, hitting, punching, kicking, putting pepper in the eyes or ginger on private parts, pouring hot oil on the body, forcing a child to take a cold shower in freezing weather, or to dip his hands in hot water, force-feeding a child by holding him down and forcing food into his mouth, refusing a child food as a form of punishment. It also includes forcing a child to undertake strenuous and excessive physical punishment like kneeling down straight, raising up the arms, bending over, carrying a heavy object - all for long periods of time. If a child is chastised with any implement.
Emotional	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child leading to severe effects on the child's emotional well being and development. This includes verbally abusing or cursing a child, telling a child they are worthless or useless, shouting at, rejecting or withholding love and affection from a child, humiliating, degrading or denying a child their worth and rights as human beings. The deliberate absence of a parent in a child's life or preventing a child from having access to his or her parents is a form of emotional abuse. Forcing a naturally left-handed child to use their right hand is emotional abuse. It may also include preventing a child from participating in normal social interaction, like not going out to play, forcing children to study nonstop, without any form of recreation as well as witnessing other people being abused – especially in the case of domestic violence.
Sexual	Having inappropriate sexual relationships with children. This happens when an adult pressurises, forces or tricks a child into taking part in any sexual activity. Such activities might include kissing, touching the young person's genitals, or breasts, having full sexual intercourse with a child (rape), performing oral sex on a child or forcing a child to perform oral sex, encouraging a child to take part in the production of or to look at pornographic materials, sending letters, emails or text messages of a sexual nature to a child and encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate manners. Children married off at an early age are also victims of sexual abuse as their roles as "wives" include having unprotected sex with their "husbands". Female Genital Mutilation is also a form of sexual abuse as it involves mutilating a girl's sexual organs.
Neglect	A persistent lack of proper care of children, the failure to provide them with proper nourishment, warmth, medical care, education, a safe environment and housing. It is the failure to act to protect a child from danger or risk of significant harm as described above. Adults who notice that children are being abused and neither say, nor do anything about it, are guilty of neglect. It is also when children are left without appropriate care and supervision.

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Why are people concerned about the safety of my child and family?



The law states that Social Care MUST look into information given to them about the safety of a child.



The welfare of a child is the most important matter even when a parent or carer is upset. Children have a right to be looked after properly and kept from harm.



Professionals such as Teachers, Doctors and Health workers have the responsibility to contact Social Care if they are concerned about the safety of a child.

Can I be involved?

Yes

- It is important that you tell the Social Worker what you think and what you would like to happen.

You will be treated with respect

- You will be told of the concerns about your child.

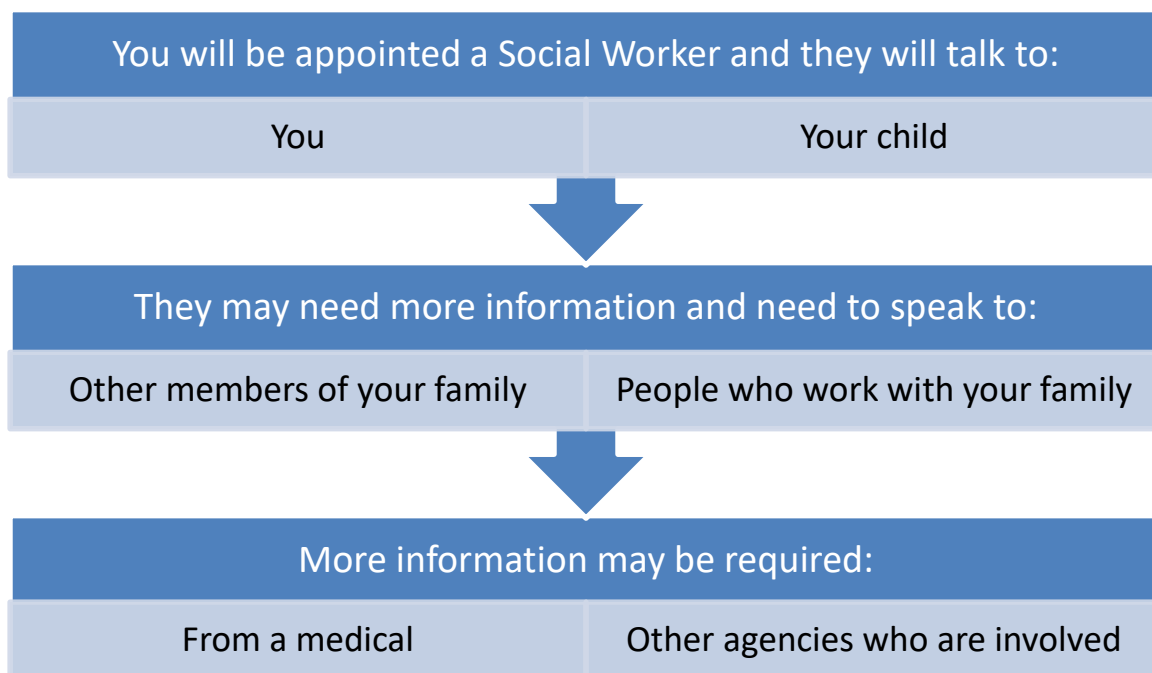
You will be told your rights

- Your opinions and views will be listened to.
- Information about you and your family will be kept confidential.

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What happens in an enquiry?



Will the Police be involved?

In some situations when the police need to decide if a criminal offence has been committed they will want to talk to you, and if old enough, your child.

- These police officers will be from the Public Protection Unit.

Remember that you should ALWAYS ask for identification.

- They will not wear uniform and are usually with a Social Worker.

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What will happen after the enquires?

- In many cases there is a simple explanation and a case is closed.

Your



- Sometimes a meeting is arranged to plan what support or action is needed to protect your child.

Child



- The Social Worker may talk to you about what additional support can be offered.

Matters



What can I do if I am unhappy about the decision?

Speak to the Social Worker for advice

You may also speak to a Solicitor

You may wish to complain to Social Care if you feel you have been treated unfairly.

An enquiry into the safety of your child is upsetting and stressful. To help with this, please try to keep the following in mind.

- **Everyone involved wants to do the best for your child.**

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- It can be helpful to have someone you trust to talk to.

For further information follow this link to the NSPCC guidance booklet.



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