

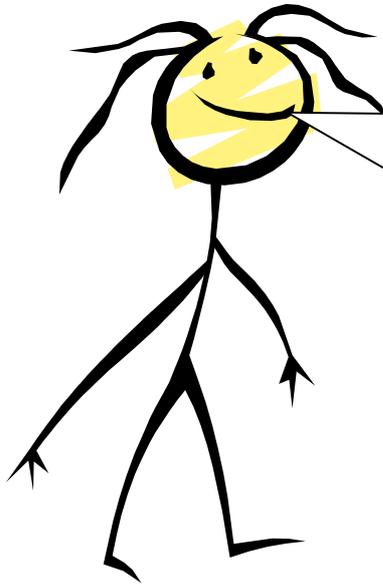
**Mid Devon District Council**

**SAFEGUARDING  
CHILDREN & YOUNG  
PEOPLE  
POLICY AND  
PROCEDURES**

*April 2009  
4th Edition*

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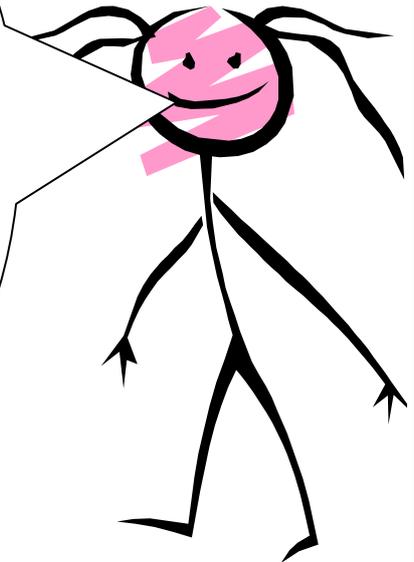
I don't directly work with children, so does this Policy affect me?

## Yes it does!

This policy applies to all situations within the Council's operation, which could potentially involve children or young people, from young children running around in a reception area to home visits where children or young people are present.

Therefore, although your work may not directly impact on or relate to children or young people, you have a responsibility to recognise and respond to child protection situations and concerns appropriately and must be aware of this policy and its procedures.

This policy affects **every** Mid Devon District Council staff member, elected member, volunteer and anyone working on behalf of and/or representing the Council.



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Children and young people have the right to have fun and be safe in the services provided for them and the activities they choose to participate in.

All children have the right to live their lives to the fullest potential, to be protected, to have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy any activity, and to be treated with dignity and respect. Although hundreds and thousands of children have wonderful experiences, abuse does happen.

There is a considerable body of legislation, government guidance and standards designed to ensure that children are protected from harm (see Appendix A). These include

- The Children Act 1989
- Working Together to Safeguard Children document by the Department of Health.
- Every Child Matters – government programme for a national framework of joined up working across children’s services.

Mid Devon District Council has both a moral and legal obligation to ensure a duty of care (Children’s Act 1989). We have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the well being of children and young people who participate in our services, so that they do so in a safe and positive atmosphere free from harassment and bullying. However, we do recognise that not all children have positive experiences in their life, and are committed in our role to promote the welfare of children and young people by encouraging good practice.

Mid Devon District Council is committed to ensuring that all children and young people are protected and kept safe from harm whilst engaged in services organised and provided by the Council. A number of services can play an important role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as part of their day-to-day work, recognising child welfare issues, sharing information, making referrals and subsequently managing or reducing risks. These services are housing, homelessness, environmental health and leisure, as well as other front line roles.

The purpose of this policy and its associated procedures is to help protect the children and young people placed in our care within our services and protect Mid Devon District Council, its staff, elected members and volunteers.

Mid Devon District Council recognises that:

- The term children or young person is used to refer to anyone under the age of 18 years. The term also refers to adults with disabilities and vulnerable adults.
- The term parent is used as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians.
- The term staff, elected members and volunteers is used to refer to employees, district councillors, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of and/or representing the Council.
- All children and young people irrespective of their age, class, religion, culture, disability, gender, ethnicity or sexual preference have the right to protection from abuse.

## 2.0

### Policy Statement

Children and young people have the right to have fun and be safe in the services provided for them and the activities they choose to participate in.

Mid Devon District Council accepts the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures, to provide a duty of care for children and young people, safeguard their well being and protect them from abuse when they are engaged in services organised and provided by the Council.

## 2.1 Aims

The Council aims to do this by:

- Raising the awareness of the duty of care responsibilities relating to children and young people throughout the Council.
- Actively encouraging good practice amongst all staff, elected members and volunteers throughout the Council and promoting wider awareness wherever possible, i.e. partnership organisations and user groups.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people. Listening to children and young people, minimising dangers and working closely with other agencies.
- Recruiting, training, supervising and supporting staff, elected members and volunteers who work with children and young people to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from abuse, and themselves against false allegations. Staff and volunteers who work with children and young people will be subject to the appropriate level Criminal Records Bureau check.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately and implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Requiring staff, elected members and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Council's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures and Code of Conduct.

## 2.2 Objectives

Objectives to achieve these aims:

- To provide appropriate training for staff, elected members and volunteers, to enable them to recognise the potential signs and indicators of abuse and to improve good practice.
- To aid staff, elected members and volunteers to respond sensitively and seriously to a child or young person who discloses information about abuse, and be confident and able to take appropriate action swiftly, regardless of whom the allegation is about, e.g. carer/staff member.
- To maintain a level of good working practice at all times and therefore reducing the risk to children and young people under the care of our staff and volunteers.
- To promote the general welfare and well being of children and young people during and within Council services.
- To develop and implement effective procedures for recording and responding to incidents and accidents.
- To develop and implement effective procedures for recording and responding to complaints of alleged or suspected child abuse.

### **3.0 What is Child Abuse?**

A person may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

#### **3.1. The Main Forms of Abuse**

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health, Home Office, Department of Education and Employment, 1999) (National Assembly for Wales 2000); Co-operating to Safeguard Children (2002) (Northern Ireland); Protecting Children – A Shared Responsibility (Scottish Executive 1998).

##### **3.1.1 Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or young person.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child or young person whom they are looking after. The situation is commonly described as factitious illness, fabricated or induced illness in children or 'Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy' after the person who first identified this situation. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child or young person.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of a deliberate act, can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

##### **3.1.2 Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child or young person's emotional development. It may involve making a child or young person feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or young people. It may also involve causing children or young people to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child or young person.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child or young person, though it may occur alone.

##### **3.1.3 Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

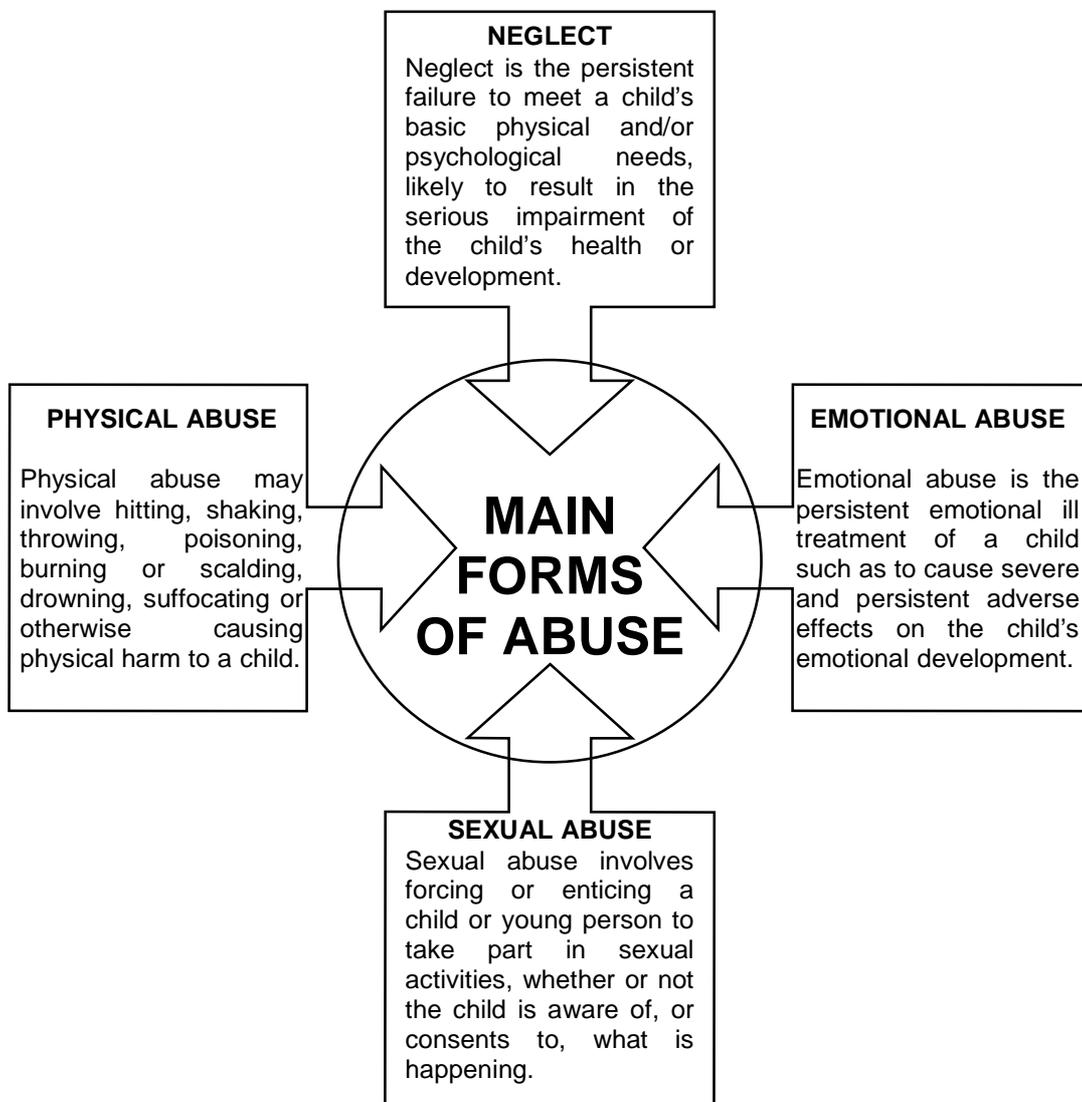
Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children or young people in looking at, or in the production of, child abuse imagery or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children or young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

### 3.1.4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child or young person's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, leaving a young child home alone or the failure to ensure that a child or young person gets appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or young persons basic emotional needs.

### 3.1.5 Diagram 1 – Main Forms of Abuse



It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children or young people are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time.

## 4. **Recognising Child Abuse**

Recognising child abuse is not easy, and is not Council staff, elected members or volunteers responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child or young person is at significant risk. Council staff, elected members and volunteers however, do have a responsibility to act and report concerns.

### 4.1 **Signs and Indicators**

Every child and young person is unique and it is difficult to predict how their behaviour will change as a result of their experience of abuse. Listed below are some physical signs and behavioural indicators that may be commonly seen in children and young people who are abused, but remember they may only be an indication and not confirmation that abuse is taking place.

#### 4.1.1 **Physical Abuse**

<b>PHYSICAL ABUSE</b>	
<b>Physical Signs</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body</li><li>➤ Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)</li><li>➤ Cigarette burns</li><li>➤ Bite marks</li><li>➤ Broken bones</li><li>➤ Scalds</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Fear of parents being approached for an explanation</li><li>➤ Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts</li><li>➤ Flinching when approached or touched</li><li>➤ Reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather</li><li>➤ Depression</li><li>➤ Withdrawn behaviour</li><li>➤ Running away from home</li></ul>

#### 4.1.2 **Emotional Abuse**

<b>EMOTIONAL ABUSE</b>	
<b>Physical signs</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ A failure to thrive or grow</li><li>➤ Sudden speech disorders</li><li>➤ Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Neurotic behaviour, e.g. hair twisting, rocking</li><li>➤ Being unable to play</li><li>➤ Fear of making mistakes</li><li>➤ Self harm</li><li>➤ Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour</li></ul>

### 4.1.3 Sexual Abuse

<b>SEXUAL ABUSE</b>	
<b>Physical Signs</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas</li> <li>➤ Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas</li> <li>➤ Sexually transmitted disease</li> <li>➤ Vaginal discharge or infection</li> <li>➤ Stomach pains</li> <li>➤ Discomfort when walking or sitting down</li> <li>➤ Pregnancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn</li> <li>➤ Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people</li> <li>➤ Having nightmares</li> <li>➤ Running away from home</li> <li>➤ Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or development age</li> <li>➤ Sexual drawings or language</li> <li>➤ Bedwetting</li> <li>➤ Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about</li> <li>➤ Self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts</li> <li>➤ Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia</li> </ul>

### 4.1.4 Neglect

<b>NEGLECT</b>	
<b>Physical Signs</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others</li> <li>➤ Constantly dirty or 'smelly'</li> <li>➤ Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight</li> <li>➤ Inappropriate dress for the conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Complaining of being tired all the time</li> <li>➤ Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments</li> <li>➤ Having few friends</li> <li>➤ Mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised</li> </ul>

The above lists are not exhaustive or definitive but are a guide.

### 4.2 Important Rule

It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these signs and indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as death, or the birth of a new baby in the family, relationship problems between parents/carers, etc.

**REMEMBER**  
**There may be other reasons that a child or young person is exhibiting some of the signs and indicators**

## 5.0 **Responding to Concerns and Allegations**

These procedures inform all staff, elected members and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected child abuse, i.e. response actions. The procedures apply to all Mid Devon District Council staff, elected members and volunteers.

### 5.1 **Important Rules**

It is important that all staff, elected members and volunteers are aware that the first person that has concerns or encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. However, staff, elected members and volunteers do have a duty of care to the child or young person to report any suspicions you may have.

**REMEMBER**  
**It is not your job to judge or investigate BUT to inform**

Nothing in this procedure should prevent the application of commonsense and if a member of staff, elected member or volunteer comes across a child in distress or obvious physical need, they should ensure the child's immediate needs are met by calling in the appropriate professional help, including the police or ambulance services if necessary. Once the child's immediate needs have been met then the basic response procedures detailed in section 6.0 should be followed.

**REMEMBER**  
**The needs of the CHILD always come first**

## 5.2 Corporate Child Protection Officers and Service Designated Officers

Each MDDC service has a designated person trained to deal with child protection issues. The Service Designated Officers and Corporate Child Protection Officers are responsible for dealing with reports or concerns about the protection of children appropriately. If staff and members need to contact one for the designated persons in each service about a concern or allegation then the contact details can be found on the Child Protection Page of Sharepoint, the Council's internal webpages.

If you are a member of the public and have a concern about MDDC services you can contact one of the corporate child protection officers below:

<b>Corporate Child Protection Officers (CCPO)</b>		
<b>Post</b>	<b>Child Protection Role</b>	<b>Work Tel</b>
Director of Community Services	MDDC Child Protection Officer	01884 234298
Consultation & Youth Involvement Officer	MDDC Deputy Child Protection Officer	01884 234276

### **Other useful contact numbers:**

#### **Mid Devon Children and Young People Services.**

Tiverton Office  
Phoenix Lane  
Tiverton  
EX16 6LB

Tel: 01392 384157 – 0845 110640  
Fax: 01392 384141  
Email: ssmdevon@devon.gov.uk

- Out of hours Emergency Duty Team - Tel: 0845 6000388 (low-call rate)
- Threshold Unit Tel: 01392 388725

#### **Local Safeguarding Children's Board Contacts**

- Local Authority Designated Officer (manages allegations) Tel: 01392 384965
- Referral Co-ordinator (allegations against staff) 01392 386013

#### **Devon and Cornwall Constabulary (Police)**

- Police Central Switchboard Tel: 0845 2 777444
- Police Emergency Tel: 999

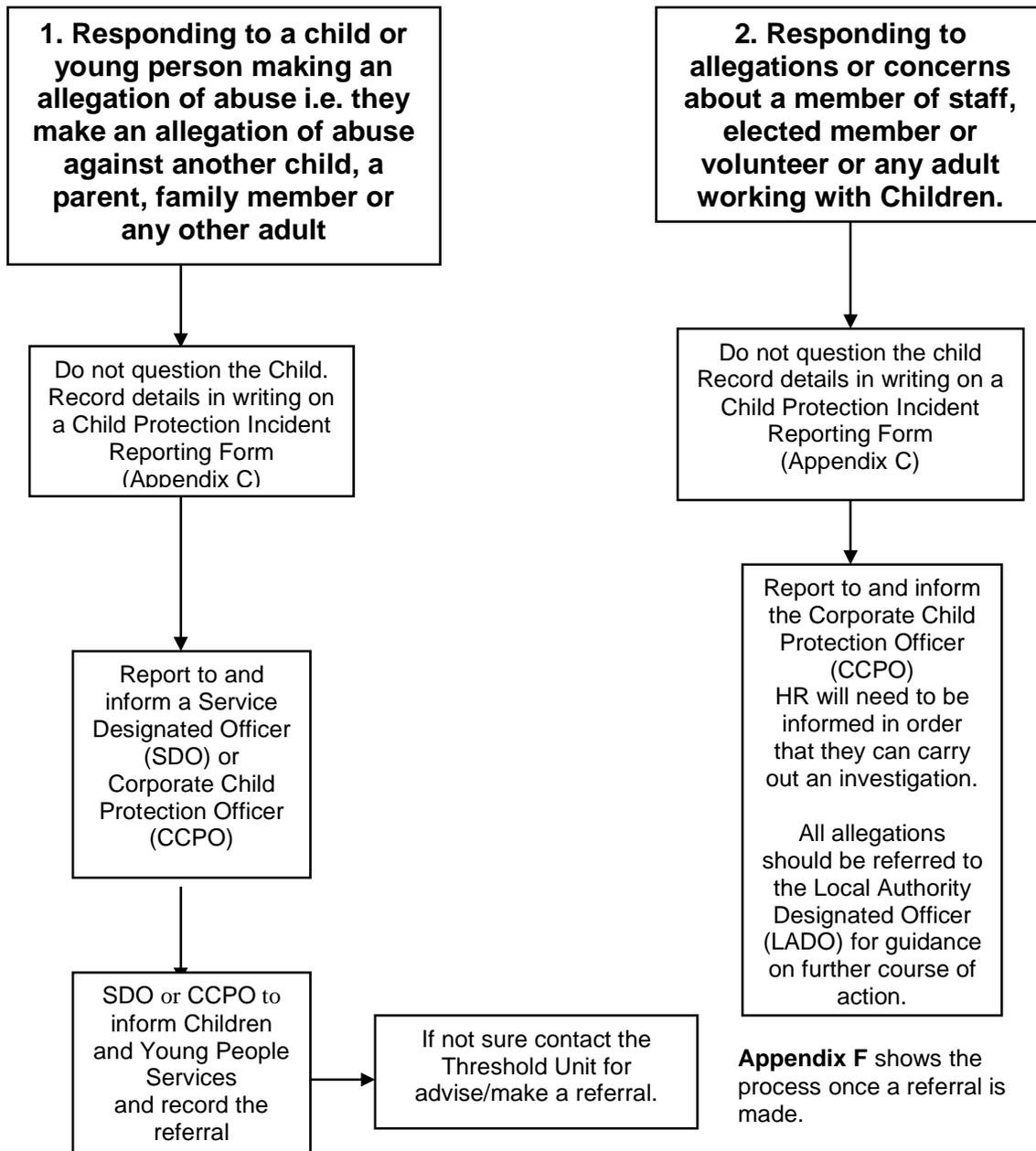
Other useful contact numbers can be found in Appendix B.

## 6.0 Basic Response Procedure

In general there are 2 situations that staff, elected members and volunteers may need to respond to a concern or case of alleged or suspected abuse, these are shown in diagram 2.

Diagram 2 illustrates the basic response procedure/actions that should be followed for the two response situations below.

### Basic response procedure/actions



## 6.1 Specific Response Procedures

More specifically the following procedures should be followed in each situation.

### 6.1.1 Responding to a child or young person making an allegation of abuse against another child, parent, family member, or adult stranger.

Abused children and young people will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe. By listening and taking seriously what the child or young person is saying you are already helping the situation. The following points are a guide to help you respond appropriately.

1. **Stay calm.**
2. Listen carefully to what is said.
3. Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – **do not promise to keep secrets.**
4. Allow the child or young person to continue at their own pace.
5. Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times **avoid asking questions** that suggest a particular answer.
6. Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
7. Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
8. Record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (see Appendix C) all the details that you are aware of and what was said using the child or young person's own words, as soon as possible. In your record you should include:
  - The date and time
  - The child or young persons name, address and date of birth.
  - The nature of the allegation.
  - A description of any visible injuries – you should never examine the child especially if it's sexual abuse.
  - Your observations – e.g. a description of the child or young person's behaviour and physical and emotional state.
  - Exactly what the child or young person said and what you said. Record the child or young persons account of what has happened in the child's words.
  - Any action you took as a result of your concerns e.g. who you spoke to and resulting actions. Include names, addresses, and telephone numbers.
  - Sign and date what you have recorded.
  - Store the information in accordance with relevant procedures, e.g. Data protection
9. Report to and inform your Service Designated Officer (if relevant), or a Corporate Child Protection Officer as shown on page 11.
10. Service Designated Person / Corporate Child Protection Officer inform relevant persons, i.e. Child and Young Peoples services and or Police if appropriate.

#### REMEMBER

**It is not your job to judge or investigate BUT to inform**

### 6.1.2 Responding to allegations or concerns against a member of staff, elected member or volunteer or any other adult working with children.

1. Take the allegation or concern seriously.
2. Consider any allegation or concern to be potentially dangerous to the child or young person.
3. Record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (see Appendix C) all the details that you are aware of as soon as possible.
4. Report to and inform your Senior Child Protection Officer who will contact the LADO.

The CCPO/LADO may feel that the allegation is bad practice, which needs to be addressed rather than an investigation. However this will be recorded.

**REMEMBER**  
**It is not your job to judge or investigate BUT to inform**

## 7.0 Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only, i.e. Service Designated Officer, Corporate Child Protection Officers, Children and Young Peoples services/ Police and the LADO.

It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child or young person, their family and any child protection investigations that may follow.

Informing the parents of a child or young person you may have concerns about needs to be dealt with in a sensitive way and should be done in consultation with Children and Young People Services. If there is a possibility that the Child Protection allegation involves a parent or family member the concern should not be discussed with them until consultation with the Child Protection officer.

Any individual under supervision has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. This should be done in joint consultation with Children and Young People Services and the Police. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice the investigation.

Recorded information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to Service Designated Officer and Corporate Child Protection Officers, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

If enquiries arise from the public (including parents) or any branch of the media, it is vital that all staff, elected members and volunteers are briefed so that they do not make any comments regarding the situation. Staff, elected members and volunteers should be informed who the relevant designated Council spokesperson will be, and all enquiries directed through them. Staff, elected members and volunteers should reply 'no comment' to all questions / enquiries.

## **8.0 Photography and Child Abuse Imagery**

There is increasing evidence that some people have used children and young people's activities and events, as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or video footage of children and young people. Staff, elected members and volunteers should be vigilant at all times and any person using cameras or videos within Mid Devon District Council services and at events or activities which involve children and young people should be approached and asked to complete a Consent Form for the use of Cameras and other Image Recorders (see Appendix E).

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to cover Council services, events and activities you must ensure that you make your expectations clear in relation to child protection.

- Check credentials of any photographers and organisations used.
- Ensure identification is worn at all times, if they do not have their own – provide it.
- Do not allow unsupervised access to children or young people or one to one photographic sessions.
- Do not allow photographic sessions outside of the activities or services, or at a child or young persons home.
- Parents must be informed that photographs of their child or young person may be taken during Council services, activities or events, and parental consent forms need to be signed agreeing to this. This must include information about how and where these photographs will be used (see Appendix D).
- It is recommended that the names of children or young people should not be used in photographs or video footage, unless with the express permission of the child or young person's parent.

## **9.0 What to expect if an allegation is made against you.**

If there is an allegation made against an employee, member, or volunteer regarding abuse in the course of their employment. Human Resources will need to be informed and the employee will be suspended immediately from activities involving children or vulnerable adults pending an investigation.

There are three investigations

1. Criminal
2. Child Protection lead by LADO
3. Disciplinary (code of conduct for members)

For more information about these investigations please read Mid Devon's Whistle Blowing Policy.

Free and confidential counselling is available for all employees.

**The Care of Children and Young People**

It is possible to limit the situations where child and young people abuse may occur, by promoting good practice to all staff, elected members and volunteers.

The following basic guidelines will help safeguard children and young people, staff, elected members and volunteers, Mid Devon District Council and other concerned organisations. The guidelines aim to promote positive practice and are examples of care, which should be taken by staff, elected members and volunteers while working with children and young people.

**10.1 Staff, Elected Members and Volunteer Guidelines**

Good practice for staff, elected members and volunteers:

- Always be publicly open when working with children and young people. Avoid situations where a member of staff, elected member or volunteer and an individual child or young person are alone unobserved.
- Children or young people should never be left unattended.
- Respect the child or young person and provide a safe and positive environment.
- If any form of physical contact is required it should be provided openly and according to appropriate guidelines, i.e. National Governing Body of Sport Guidelines
- If supervision in changing rooms or similar environments is required, ensure staff work in pairs and never enter opposite sex changing rooms.
- With mixed groups, supervision should be by a male and female member of staff, where possible.
- must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of the activity.
- must place the well being and safety of the child or young person above the development of performance.
- must feel confident to report concerns or worries about other staff members, elected members or volunteers to the appropriate person in authority, i.e. Service Designated Officer or Corporate Child Protection Officer, or directly report to Children and Young peoples services and/or the Police.
- Line Managers and parents must be informed of all incidents and accidents at the earliest opportunity. This can be done by telephone or writing depending on the situation.
- If a child or young person is accidentally injured as the result of a staff member, elected member or volunteers actions, seems distressed in any way, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, always report such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written report.
- If a child or young person arrives at the activity or service showing any signs or symptoms that give you cause for concern you must act appropriately and follow the procedures outlined in Section 5.
- With regards to children not being picked up after an event, wait with the child, after 15 minutes call the contact number, if no reply wait another 15 minutes and try again, if after a third attempt you have no response call Children and Young Peoples Services.

- When organising an event/activity which children are attending a risk assessment must be carried out and the relevant permission is required from parent/guardians for photography (Appendix D).

## **10.2 Poor Practice**

It is not good practice for staff, elected members and volunteers to:

- Spend unreasonable amounts of time alone with children or young people away from others.
- Take children or young people alone on a car journey, however short.
- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay.
- Engage in sexually provocative games.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children or young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use it yourself.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to child or young person, even in fun.
- Let any allegation a child or young person makes be ignored or go unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for children and young people that they can do for themselves, e.g. assist with changing.
- NB. It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children or young people, particularly if they are very young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parents. In an emergency situation that requires this type of help, you should endeavour to have someone present and fully inform the parents as soon as it is reasonably possible. In such situations it is important that you ensure that all staff etc are sensitive to the child or young person and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.
- Share a room with a child or young person.
- Enter areas designated only for the opposite sex.
- Use the internet to access Child Abuse Imagery sites (see MDDC Email and Internet Policy and Guidance)
- Young peoples contact details established through work should not be transferred to personal devices (mobile phone, diaries, emails etc) or used outside of work.

## **10.3 Good Practice for Mid Devon District Council**

### **The Care of the Organisation**

Anyone could have the potential to abuse children or young people in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken by Mid Devon District Council to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people.

#### **10.3.1 Use of Contractors**

Mid Devon District Council and its staff, elected members and volunteers should undertake reasonable care that contractors doing work on behalf of the Council are monitored appropriately.

Any contractor or sub-contractor, engaged by the Council in areas where workers are likely to come into contact with children, should have it's own equivalent Child Protection Policy, or failing this, must comply with the terms of this policy.

Where there is potential for contact with children or young people it is the responsibility of the manager who is using the services of the contractor to check that the correct Criminal Records Bureau check has been satisfactorily completed.

### 10.3.2 Facilities

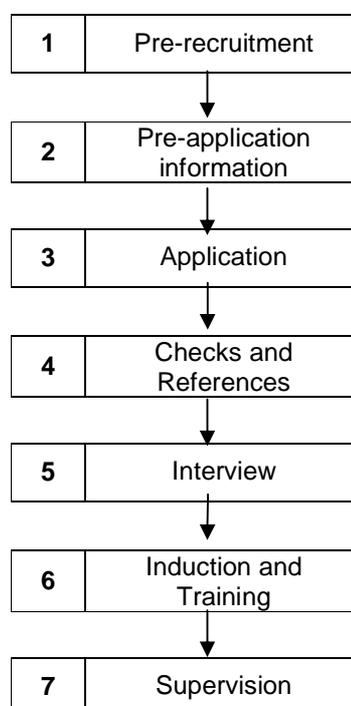
Mid Devon facilities which are used by children and young people need to be kept in a safe condition and risk assessed.

## 11.0 Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers (where working or having contact with children is a requirement of the job)

It is important that all staff and volunteers working or having contact with children and young people, whether they are full time, part time, paid or unpaid, have the same recruitment and selection procedures applied to them and that we ascertain as much information as possible. The fundamental stages of the procedure for recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers are illustrated in diagram 3

### Diagram 3

#### Fundamental stages in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers working with children and young people



### **11.1 Stage 1 - Pre-recruitment**

If any form of advertising is used to recruit staff and volunteers, it should reflect:

- The aims of Mid Devon District Council
- If appropriate the aims of the particular programme involved
- The responsibilities of the role
- The level of experience or qualifications required (e.g. experience of working with children is an advantage)
- Mid Devon District Councils Equal Opportunities Policy and Code of Conduct
- Requirement for and level of CRB check where the role has been assessed as eligible for disclosure

### **11.2 Stage 2 - Pre-application Information**

The pre-application information e.g. application pack, sent to interested or potential applicants should contain:

- A job description including roles and responsibilities
- A person specification (e.g. stating qualifications or experience required)
- An application form
- CRB disclosure policy information where required

### **11.3 Stage 3 - Applicant Information**

Information that can/should be requested within the application form and a self-declaration form includes:

- Name, address and National Insurance Number
- Past career, relevant interests, any gaps in employment and reasons for leaving
- Relevant experience, educational qualifications, job specific qualifications and training
- Any criminal record
- The names of two people (not relatives) willing to provide written references that comment on the applicant's previous experience of, and suitability for, working with children and young people where it is a requirement of the job, one must be a past/present employer.
- Medical declarations

It should be made clear that effective measures are in place to ensure confidentiality of information under the Data Protection legislation.

### **11.4 Stage 4 - Checks and References**

Staff and volunteers recruited to work in services for children and young people must be checked for any possible irregularities, which may give reason for concern.

- A check must be carried out with the Criminal Records Bureau at the appropriate level decided by Service Managers in discussion with HR.

- A minimum of two references must be taken up, of which one must be present/previous employer. References should include the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people where it is a requirement of the job.

### **11.5 Stage 5 - Interview**

If relevant / appropriate, at least two persons should conduct an interview at which they should explore information contained in the application form against the qualities and skills needed in the post. Example questions are held by the deputy CPO.

### **11.6 Stage 6 – Induction and Training**

It is important that the recruitment and selection process is followed by relevant inductions and training in order to further protect children and young people from possible abuse. Appropriate training will enable individuals to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice and concerns or allegations of abuse. The induction and training should include:

- Basic awareness of the signs and indicators of abuse and an understanding of their responsibility to act swiftly and sensitively when concerns arise.
- All staff and volunteers need to be aware of the procedures they need to follow in response to any concerns that they have.
- Line Managers should ensure that this policy document is read and understood by all new and existing staff and volunteers and that the policy declaration (Appendix G) is signed and completed.
- Clarification of the job expectations, roles and responsibilities (e.g. through a formal or informal work programme / objectives).
- Child protection procedures explained and training needs established.

#### Relevant Training Courses

- Local Safe Guarding Children's Board (LSCB) – Various courses at different levels
- NSPCC – Educare Programme
- Sports Coach UK – Good Practice and Child Protection
- Department of Health – Fit and Safe

#### Other areas of training:

- First Aid, e.g. St Johns First Aid Qualification / HSE First Aid at Work
- How to work effectively with children and young people, e.g. Sports Coach UK

### **11.7 Stage 7 - Supervision**

All staff and volunteers work more effectively when they are well informed, trained and supported. Line Managers should be sensitive to any concerns about abuse, act on them at an early stage and offer support to those who report.

It is the responsibility of Line Managers to monitor good practice. This can be done in a number of ways:

- Direct observation of the activity or service.
- Staff appraisals, mentoring and providing feedback on performance.
- Children and young people's feedback on the activities or services.

Deter *offenders* by using a consistent message 'we are committed to safeguarding children' by having a

1. Clear framework to make decisions
2. Fully scrutinising all evidence on application form and referees
3. Exploring motivations and attitudes

## **Recommended Legislation and Guidance**

### **Legislation**

- The Children Act 1989  
Aims to ensure the welfare and development needs of children are met and that children are protected from harm  
[www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1989/Ukpga\\_19890041\\_en\\_1.htm](http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1989/Ukpga_19890041_en_1.htm)
- Human Rights Act 1998  
[www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980042.htm](http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980042.htm)
- The Data Protection Act 1984 and 1998  
[www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980029.htm](http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980029.htm)
- The Protection of Children Act 1999  
[www.doh.gov.uk](http://www.doh.gov.uk)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000  
[www.hmso.gov.uk](http://www.hmso.gov.uk)
- Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2000  
[www.hmso.gov.uk](http://www.hmso.gov.uk)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974  
[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
- Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)  
[www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk)

### **Guidance**

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health)  
<http://www.doh.gov.uk>
- Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures (LSCB)  
[www.devon.gov.uk/socserve/childprotect](http://www.devon.gov.uk/socserve/childprotect)
- Every Child Matters (Department for Education and Skills)  
[www.dfes.gov.uk/everychildmatters](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/everychildmatters)
- First Check – NSPCC  
A step by step guide for organisations to safeguard children, implement a child protection policy, procedure and code of practice  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

## **Useful Contacts**

- **Mid Devon Children and Young People Services**  
Tiverton Office  
Phoenix Lane  
Tiverton  
EX16 6LB  
Tel: 01392 384157  
Fax: 01392 384141  
Email: [ssmdevon@devon.gov.uk](mailto:ssmdevon@devon.gov.uk)  
Emergency Duty Team - Tel: 0845 6000388 (low-call rate)
- **Devon and Cornwall Constabulary (Police)**  
Police Central Switchboard  
Police Emergency  
Police Central Referral Unit  
Tel: 0845 2 777444  
Tel: 999  
Tel: 0845 6051166
- **NSPCC**  
Child Protection Helpline  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)  
Tel: 0808 800 5000
- **Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)**  
PO Box 110, Liverpool, L3 6ZZ  
[www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk)  
Tel: 0870 90 90 822
- **Devon County Council**  
(Records Disclosure Service)  
Devon County Council can act as an umbrella body to process Criminal Records Bureau Checks for other organisations, i.e. community organisations.  
[www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01392 383266
- **Children and Young Peoples Unit**  
[www.allchildrenni.gov.uk/](http://www.allchildrenni.gov.uk/)  
Tel: (028) 90528429
- **Childline**  
Tel: 0800 1111
- **Local Authority Designated Officer**  
Tel: 01392 384965
- **Referral Co-ordinator**  
Tel: 01392 386013
- **Threshold Unit**  
Tel: 01392 388725
- **Free and confidential counselling is available for all employees**  
Office hours: 01392 383277  
Out of hours: 01392 382549

Please note if more than one child is involved please complete a form for each.

**Appendix C**

# **Child Protection Incident Reporting Form**

All information will be treated in strict confidence



Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Venue: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Next of Kin: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of someone else? Give details:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include dates, times etc. of any specific incidents:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you spoken to the child? If so, what was said?

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Have you spoken to the parent(s)? If so, what was said?

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Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details?

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Have you consulted anybody? Give details

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Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

To whom reported: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of reporting: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This form should now be given to a Service Designated Person or Corporate Child Protection Officer by hand in a sealed envelope marked confidential.

# **Example Consent Form**

All information will be treated in strict confidence



Please use block capitals and print clearly

Event/Activity: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Conditions: (if any) e.g. asthma, diabetes, allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that my son/daughter is in good health and I give consent for my son/daughter to participate in the above event/activity.

I consent to any emergency treatment required by my son/daughter during the course of the event/activity

I give consent for my son/daughter to be photographed during the course of the above event/activity and I consent to the photographs being used by Mid Devon District Council for bona fide promotional purposes. This also includes the use on the World Wide Web (internet).

The information you provide will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, to ensure the safety of all participants and may be shared with other people/organisations involved in the delivery of the above event/activity, if appropriate. By signing this form you are consenting to the Council using the information, which you have supplied in the manner stated above.

Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Consent Form for the use of Cameras and other Image Recorders



Venue/Area:.....	Ref No:.....
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Description of Equipment:.....  
.....

Surname:..... Fornames:.....

Address:.....  
.....  
..... Postcode:.....

Telephone No:.....	Mobile Telephone No:.....
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Fax No:.....	Email Address:.....
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Name(s) of the subject(s)

1.....	5.....
2.....	6.....
3.....	7.....
4.....	8.....

Relationship of the photographer and subject (s).....  
.....

Reason for taking photographs and/or uses the images are being, or are intended to be put to (i.e. family record/advertising etc)  
.....  
.....

I declare that the information provided is true and correct and that the images will only be used for the purposes stated.

Signed:..... Date:.....

Authorised by:..... Date:.....

Position held:.....

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 the information that you have provided will be used only for the purposes monitoring camera and image recorder use and will be destroyed at the end of a year.

### **When Making a Referral for Service Designated Officers**

#### **Prior to making a referral**

Prior to making a referral to the Assessment Unit, the Service Designated Officer (SDO) should consider if the child / young person's needs can be met by services from within their own agency or by other professionals already involved with the family. The SDO should determine whether Children and Young Peoples services (C&YP) are already involved with the child or family so the concern can be dealt with together.

At times it may be an officer that contacts Children and Young Peoples Services due to the nature of their job to identify a way to resolve the issue i.e. an Environmental Health Officer may be concerned about a rat infestation in a flat, but the family are not complying with the officer. The officer will need to contact a number of agencies including C&YP services to deal with it, as children are involved, the officer must inform their SDO of this action so a record can be made.

It is acknowledged that professionals experience some difficulty in deciding appropriate points of intervention. The multi-agency threshold matrices has been developed (by a multi-agency steering group) to assist professionals when undertaking their own assessment to determine levels of need.

The consent of the parents / carers should always be sought, except where a child is considered to be at risk of harm and it is believed that seeking parental consent may increase this risk.

#### **When to make a referral**

Service Designated Officers are to consult with Children and Young People's Services to reach a decision, which should be recorded clearly by both agencies. If a child is not known to Children and Young Peoples Services or the child is known, but it is a serious allegation/concern, then the SDO must send the referral form (appendix C) within 48 hours after the initial referral is made.

#### **Urgent referrals**

If you consider that urgent action is needed, for example, if a child is in immediate danger or needs accommodation, telephone your local Children and Young People's office and give as much information as you can. Your referral will be passed immediately to the Manager who will decide upon the action needed and will normally respond to you within one hour. You must follow up your telephone call by sending a completed referral form to the local Children and Young People's office within 48 hours (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2005 paragraph 5.32).

#### **On receipt of a referral**

The Assessment Unit Threshold Practice Manager should make a decision on action to be taken within 24 hours of its receipt. The referrer should receive written confirmation of the receipt of the referral and its outcome by telephone / letter within 7 working days.

**Declaration**

Mid Devon District Council is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of children and young people by protecting them, from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional harm.

Working as an employee or volunteer of Mid Devon District Council or as an elected member it is important that you have taken time to thoroughly read this Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

By being made aware of the policy it is our intention to ensure that all are proactive in providing a safe and secure environment for the children and young people in our care.



Declaration:

I have read and understood Mid Devon District Council's Child Protection Policy and Procedures and I accept the principles therein.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Position in Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

This will be kept in your personnel file